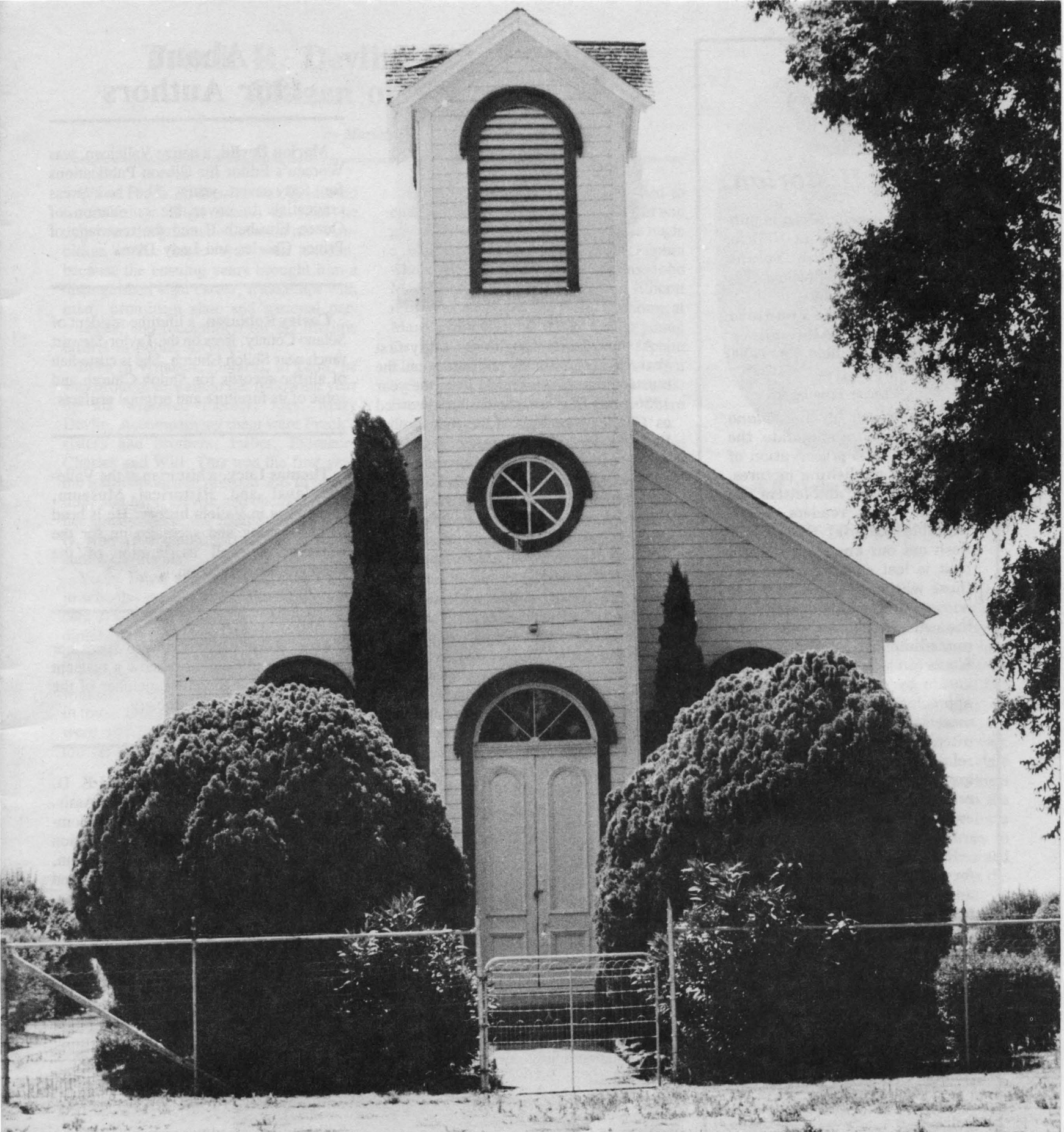




The Solano Historian

VOLUME III

DECEMBER 1986



Solano Historian

The *Solano Historian* is published twice yearly at Vallejo, California, by the Solano County Historical Society.

Edited by

**Matthew and Lee Fountain
and Robert Allgood.**

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The purpose of the *Solano Historian* is to stimulate the enjoyment and preservation of history by publishing pictures, stories, articles, and letters furnished by its readers. Much valuable material that would flesh out our knowledge of the past is lost each year because those who might save it either do not realize its value or lack the motivation to take any immediate action. The *Solano Historian* will supply the motivation by showing there is an appreciative audience for such material and that people are intensely interested in items relating to their own background, that jog their memory, remind them of memorable events, and satisfy their curiosity.

Readers who furnish material for publication will find they are amply rewarded by their own feeling of satisfaction and the recognition earned by their contribution.

The *Solano Historian* is now soliciting material of Solano and North Bay interest for future issues. More details concerning this may be obtained by contacting President Mary Higham or Lee Fountain. Comments on this issue are also welcome.

The Society does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of statements or opinions of contributions although every effort is made to be historically correct.

Solano County Historical Society
P. O. Box 922, Vallejo, CA 94590



Presidents Message

As our Society begins its thirty-first year, it seems timely to reflect on the outstanding progress made from the year 1956 when fifty-one persons are recorded as Charter Members. Like many other fledgling societies, a group of dedicated people came together to offer their time and energy to a purpose they believed in. The purpose: To preserve the rich and colorful history of Solano County. In the past thirty years that purpose has been achieved in many ways, and by many hard working members.

We are proud of the restoration and marking of historic places. The Pena Adobe is only one example. A job well done! The Society has presented excellent programs at historic places with speakers well-versed on the topic at hand.

Many happy events have enriched our lives. The annual Spring tour has always been a favorite with our members. We have been everywhere through the years; from Jamestown in the North, to San Jose in the South. We have traveled on water, by train and bus...and always in good company.

We treasure the NOTE BOOK with its wealth of historical information, rare photographs, and fascinating old maps. Published since the beginning of the Society, editors Bob Power and Ernest Wichels are credited with their contribution to local history.

We treasure our annual Pioneer Day celebration every September at the historic Rockville Church. I believe the long-gone pioneer families have given their blessings, as there has never been a rainy Pioneer Day!

We treasure our annual Christmas Party where friends come together in perfect harmony to share in the spirit of a favorite holiday.

But most of all, we treasure the efforts put forth by the fifty-one Charter Members. With their visions of things to come, they surely did begin a very successful historical society.

Mary Higham President 1985-1987

About Our Authors

Marion Devlin, a native Vallejoan, was Women's Editor for Gibson Publications for forty-seven years. She had press credentials to cover the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana.

Carley Robinson, a lifetime resident of Solano County, lives on the Taylor-Stewart ranch near Shiloh Church. She is custodian of all the records for Shiloh Church and some of its furniture and original artifacts.

Thomas Lucy, a historian at the Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum, specializes in Vallejo history. He is head of cataloguing and accessioning for the Museum as well as curator of the photographic collection.

Mrs. Ruth Kilkenny, who spent her early years in Cement, is now a resident of Dixon and a founding member of the new Dixon Historical Society.

Sue Lemmon, in 1963 relieved E. D. Wichels to become Administrative Assistant to the Mare Island Shipyard Commander. After retiring from this position in 1975, she has served as Yard Historian, and with Wichels has been collecting and identifying the thousands of photographs, books, letters, documents, and artifacts relating to Mare Island's history. With Wichels she has co-authored *Sidewheelers to Nuclear Power* and *St. Peter's Chapel*.

Errata

We apologize for the printer's errors in "Chief Solano, The Legend Examined" which appeared in our last issue (May 1986) of the *Solano Historian* and call attention to the following corrections. Each correction is underlined.

Page 5, right column, bottom: the present county of Solano...February 28, 1850.

Page 8, footnote 7 to map: Lomas de Suy Sun

Page 10, left column, top: officially confirmed on January 21, 1842.

Page 22, footnote 8: H. H. Bancroft cites "Numa" and "Tetoy"

Page 22, footnote 11: Depositions in Archibald A. Ritchie claim new file

Shiloh Church

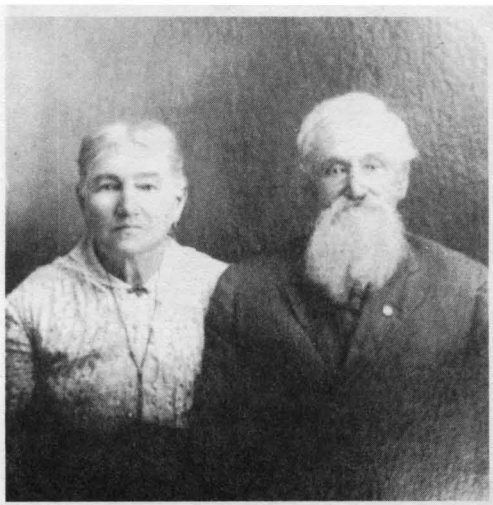
by Carley Robinson

Deep in the Montezuma Hills in eastern Solano County on Old Shiloh Road sits a prim and starkly beautiful white clapboard church. The road takes its name from the rural church which has been known as Shiloh Church since it was organized by a group of early pioneers in 1869.

The garden in front of the church, including four great arborvitae trees, is carefully tended by members of a local 4-H club, and the cemetery in back of the church, reminiscent of country churchyards in New England and Britain, is in proper order under the care of trustees of the cemetery district although only two of the original two hundred Monterey cypresses that were planted in 1879 remain.

On any warm summer day now, the quiet of the countryside is interrupted only by an occasional car on its way to a working ranch, to Rio Vista, or to Birds Landing. The fields are covered with the remnants of an earlier harvest or lie fallow waiting for a late fall planting. Sheep graze noiselessly within fenced fields while the rolling Montezuma Hills reflect the gold so characteristic of the California agrarian landscape.

During the last one hundred and fifteen years, the little church has answered many of the community's needs and been the scene of many of its most important ceremonies. Weddings, funerals, reunions, and family gatherings have been sheltered within its walls. The names of well-known pioneers whose descendents are present day residents appear in its records. For over a century the same family names appear again, —Lambie, Landrum, Stewart, Bird, Spencer, Taylor.



Mr. and Mrs. James Blacklock were photographed on their 55th wedding anniversary. He helped secure the deed to the land for the church.



The Solano County Historical Society contributed \$200 toward the painting of Shiloh Church in 1981. Both this view from the cemetery behind the church and the view on the cover of this issue were taken July 17, 1986.

The first meeting of the "citizens of Montezuma" occurred on August 25, 1869, in the Daniels School next to the property that soon was to become the site of the new church. A committee of five was selected "to secure the title to a piece of land formally designated after which they should collect the monies subscribed and have the Church House erected thereon." An order to this effect was signed by "C. Landrum, president, and Miss E. D. Cary, secretary, Daniels School House, August 25, 1869." Only four days later the committee met again and selected the following officers: Mr. John Lambie, president; Mr. C. Landrum, secretary; Mr. S. Stewart, treasurer; Wm. Spencer and S. Stewart, collectors. Messers, Blacklock and Lambie were "to secure from Mr. Arnold a deed of land — an acre and a half for one dollar."

These early citizens of Montezuma Hills may have settled here as the result of a plan of one Lansing W. Hastings, a lawyer from Ohio, who arrived in the area in 1843. He became familiar with the country but returned to the East where he wrote the "Emigrants Guide," a helpful handbook for western travelers. Then he returned to the California scene as a Mormon agent, searching for a site for a great city. He eventually settled on the land at

the head of Suisun Bay, close to Cache Slough. Near Collinsville he built a stout adobe in 1847 as a potential headquarters for a great city. He named the city of his dreams Montezuma City and laid great plans for its development. However, the city did not materialize, but the adobe still remains and is now on the National Register.

What did materialize was the Shiloh Church, built twenty-two years later by the "citizens of Montezuma." The first two meetings of the Church House committee were only the start of many and frequent gatherings. The original plans had to be scaled down to accommodate the monies pledged; it was difficult to find a builder; and the necessary bonds had to be secured. Finally by October 11, 1869, all was in order and Mr. George Anderson of Suisun was awarded the contract. The next official notice given by the building committee was the announcement of the general meeting at the church on February 17, 1870, for the purpose of examining and accepting the structure from the builder, Mr. Anderson. Only seven months from the initial meeting to propose a church until the community could meet within its walls as a congregation!

The next few years saw some amenities added to the original structure. There was

a fence added in front of the church in 1871 and two years later the cemetery was fenced. Twenty-nine cemetery lots were sold to local families, with the first burial being that of Mrs. Sara Shedd on August 20, 1874. And it was in that year, too, that two hundred Monterey cypresses were planted to turn the prairie graveyard into a lovely shaded woodland. These trees joined the groves of eucalyptus trees that the farmers had brought to the barren hills for shade, landscaping, and windbreaks.

By January of 1874 the Board of Trustees decided to call a minister for the congregation, —“the Reverend E.D. Bushnell to preach at Shiloh Church twice each month for the sum of six hundred dollars per year, provided the Church Pews could be sold for the amount within four weeks; if the pews are not sold for that amount within time specified, said contract to be null and void.” Null and void it became for Mr. Bushnell at least. Unfortunately, time did expire before



Annie Taylor, eldest of the Taylor daughters, dressed in her prettiest clothes, is ready to go visiting in her pony cart.



The Taylor-Stewart home, now occupied by descendants of the original owner, is a few miles from the Shiloh Church and nearly one-hundred years old.

enough pews were sold, so the trustees, coping with the situation, decided to extend the period of sale, and if they could not sell the pews, "other arrangements would be made." The determined parishioners finally hired a Mr. Crawford as preacher for the year 1875 for a salary of \$600. Among fund-raising activities arranged to augment the sale of pews was the proposition "to hire Mr. Chase to hold



Frank Taylor was a prominent rancher who participated in the early activities of the church.

a concert in the Church.....the proceeds to be given to the Trustees to be used as they saw fit."

The day after Christmas in 1875 was a busy one for Shiloh Church. The trustees were meeting at the home of Mr. J. N. Crawford nearby while Sunday School was in session in the church. During the business meeting the trustees decided to have an outhouse built in the rear of the church, a new trustee was elected, and "on motion the clerk was instructed to have one hundred deeds printed for the Cemetery. There being no other business to transact the Board adjourned." On leaving Crawford's home, the trustees saw the church was on fire. The Sunday School session was then interrupted by the alarm and all present rushed to save what they could. The organ, library, and pulpit, seats, and a portion of the windows were saved. However, the lovely little church was burned to the ground. A defective stove pipe was the culprit.

Only four days later at the Montezuma School House the people of the community met to evaluate their situation and unanimously decided to begin rebuilding. The same names, the same problems, the same successes, but this time the Reverend Crawford took much of the responsibility for leadership.

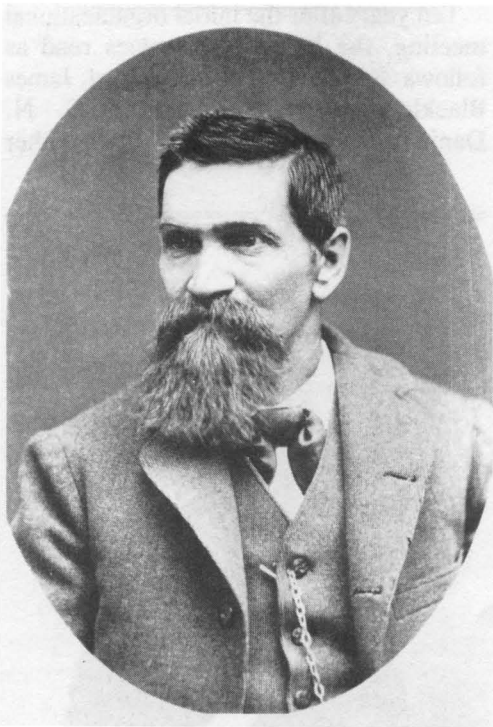
Ten years after the initial organizational meeting, the Board of Trustees read as follows: Samuel Stewart, John Bird, James Blacklock, John Stewart, Jr., G. N. Daniels, Thomas Menzies, Christopher



William Stewart, later owner of the Taylor home, is resplendent in his lodge regalia.



Combines, such as shown here harvesting a field of wheat in front of the Taylor-Stewart home, commonly were pulled by twenty horses. In this picture there are six horses abreast in the next-to-last row.



John Bird of Birds Landing was an early trustee of the church.

and whose descendents are among the nearby residents of today. Properties in these rolling Montezuma hills tend to stay in the same families from generation to generation. While most of the available cemetery plots have been taken by local families, there are still a few plots remaining for purchase.

Just a few miles down the road from the church toward Birds Landing is a beautiful Victorian home built by one of the early trustees of the original church. Built some twenty years later than the church, it is still in the same time frame as Shiloh. The Taylor family who built the home must have enjoyed the best of times in their comfortable and spacious home. Since it has remained in the same family for a hundred years it reflects the care and protection given it. The beautiful wrought iron outlining the widow's walk and the heavy wrought iron fence surrounding the house denote the best in late Victorian architecture. The original interior shutters still protect the rooms from the hot summer sun. Inside, the china cupboard filled with Haviland and Bavarian dishes, family portraits of several generations, and books handed down from father to son or to daughter tell a story of the pleasant life that was lived in the Montezuma Hills as the well preserved church and cemetery reveal the values that guided the early settlers.



The young lad in Kilts became one of Montezuma Hill's best known citizens, the well-beloved historian Wood Young.

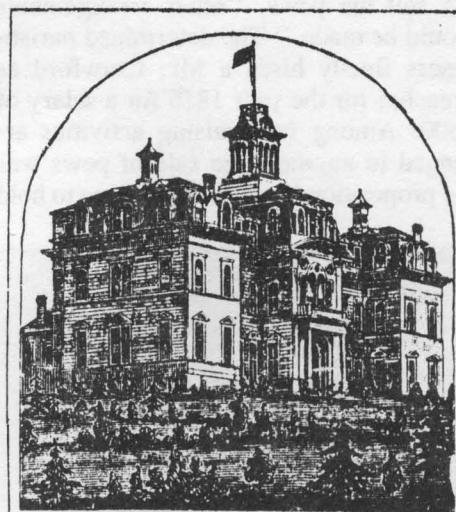
Nelson. This board was somewhat more sophisticated than previous ones for minutes of the last meeting of 1880 reported "the Association adjourned sine die."

The founding fathers of Shiloh chose the Cumberland Presbyterian Church as their denominational home. The Cumberland Presbyterians were a group of Kentucky and Tennessee Presbyterians who in 1810 left the main church over some of the more restrictive Calvinistic tenets. Many of them migrated to the western frontier. In 1906 the Presbyterian Church revised its confession so a majority of the Cumberland group returned to the fold although some have always remained a separate church.

In recent years the lovely old church has not been used as a house of worship with the exception of a few years in the late 1950's when services were held there by a non-denominational group from Elmira. However, the Church remains available for weddings, funerals, or approved gatherings. Although the building is in excellent condition, a wave of vandalism a few years ago disturbed its serenity. Three beautiful chancel chairs which had been stored and protected by a neighbor when the Church was abandoned but returned when it was renovated in the 1950's were stolen. A few grave markers were toppled and injured.

The names on the simple monuments in the cemetery include the same names as those listed in the early church documents,

The below notice appeared often in *The Rescue*, during 1882.



HOME FOR ORPHANS.

In 1869 a capacious and elegant structure was erected near Vallejo, in Solano Co., and in 1870 it was dedicated and opened under the auspices of the Grand Lodge, and entitled the "Good Templars' Home for Orphans." Its title is not meant to carry any idea of exclusiveness as to the class admitted to its sheltering offices. On the contrary, it is open to all; the only passport required at its portals is to be a homeless orphan child. Children under twelve years of age are received and cared for, and over 130 orphaned children are now being cared for within its walls. The buildings are slightly, capacious and pleasantly located. The Home is under the general management and control of a Board of Trustees and a Board of Lady Managers—the former comprising nine gentlemen of the Order, who have charge of the building, grounds (20 acres), and financial matters; while the Board of Lady Managers is composed of eight prominent lady members of the Order, selected from various parts of the State, and has charge of the domestic relations of the institution. The educational affairs are under the joint control and management of the Board of Trustees and Lady Managers. Within the Home a graded school under the "Public School System" of the State is taught by two competent teachers. Upwards of \$160,000 have been expended in the erection, care and maintenance of this institution. The Good Templars of this jurisdiction have accepted the self-imposed duty of sustaining this Home gratefully, and the membership is linked together in its support with unflinching devotion.

ADOPTION.—Children may be adopted from the Home by reliable and proper persons upon application to Board of Lady Managers.

ADMISSION OF CHILDREN.—All letters concerning the admission of children, or their adoption from the Home, should be addressed to the Secretary of the Board of Lady Managers, Mrs. M. M. Carpenter, 1142 Howard street, San Francisco, who will furnish the necessary blank forms.

TRUSTEES OF ORPHANS HOME.—Wm. H. Mills, Sacramento; Wm. Sims, Winters; Hon. Niles Searles, Nevada City; Dr. R. H. McDonald, San Francisco; Dr. I. S. Halsey and Samuel Kitto, Vallejo; R. Thompson, San Francisco; M. C. Winchester, G. W. C. T., Geo. B. Katzenstein, G. W. S., ex-officio.

LADY MANAGERS OF ORPHANS HOME.—President, Mrs. C. B. Thompson, No. 1039 Market Street, San Francisco; Secretary, Mrs. M. M. Carpenter, 1142 Howard St., San Francisco; Financial Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Mayhew, Red Bluff; Mrs. M. E. Congdon, Mariposa; Mrs. C. P. Huntton, Sacramento; Mrs. Capt. Plummer, San Francisco; Mrs. S. L. Robbins, Vallejo; Mrs. E. P. Stevens, G. W. V. T., ex-officio.

Good Templars' Home for Orphans

A compilation by the editors from material supplied by Dorothy Marsden, Ernest Wichels, Thomas Lucy, Albert Encerti, and several former residents of the Home who preferred to remain anonymous.

One of Vallejo's most successful institutions in the city's formative years was the Good Templars' Home for Orphans which dominated the local landscape for forty-five years and admitted over 4500 children to its care. Built on land purchased from Frisbie, Wood & Company and known locally as the Hannibal Ranch, the property consisted of 103 acres. The Good Templars were splendid judges of real estate for those 103 acres now are known as Vista de Vallejo and are covered with many of the city's finest residences. But from 1867 when the property was purchased until 1923 when it became a civic golf course, its stately three-story building with the mansard roof and classical dimensions looked down on the city to its

southwest huddled around the waterfront on Mare Island Channel.

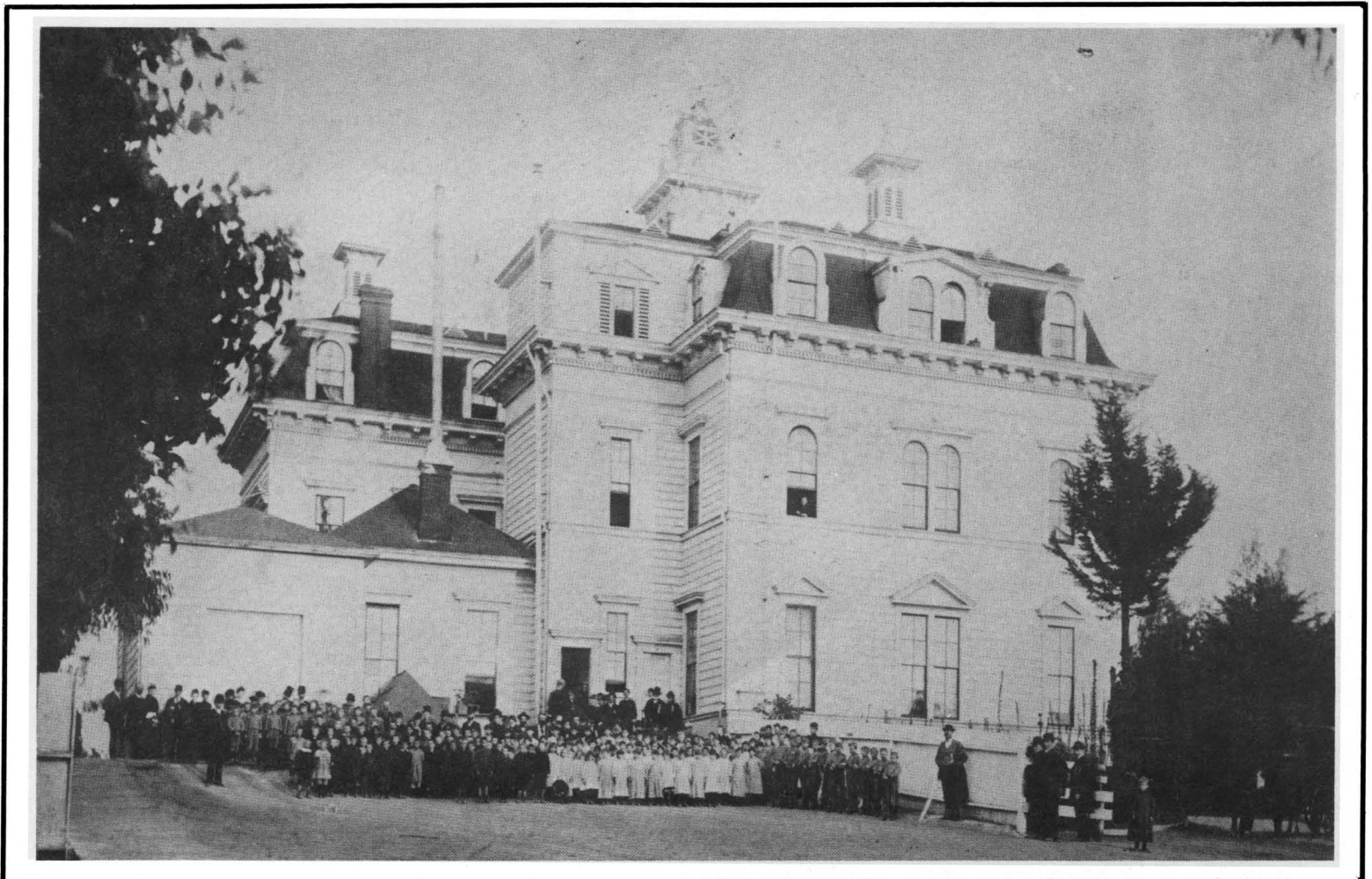
The Order of Good Templars was started by a society of abstainers in Utica, New York in 1851. It spread rapidly over the United States and Canada, reaching Suisun, Benicia, and Vallejo in 1861. In 1868 it became international by entering England, and soon thereafter many other countries.

The idea of an orphanage was attributed to Mrs. Elvira Baldwin of Sacramento. When this idea was communicated to Mr. George Simonton of Vallejo and Mr. W. H. Mills of Sacramento, they immediately embraced it and originated the Orphans' Homestead scheme. A committee was then appointed, Mr. George W. Simonton, A.

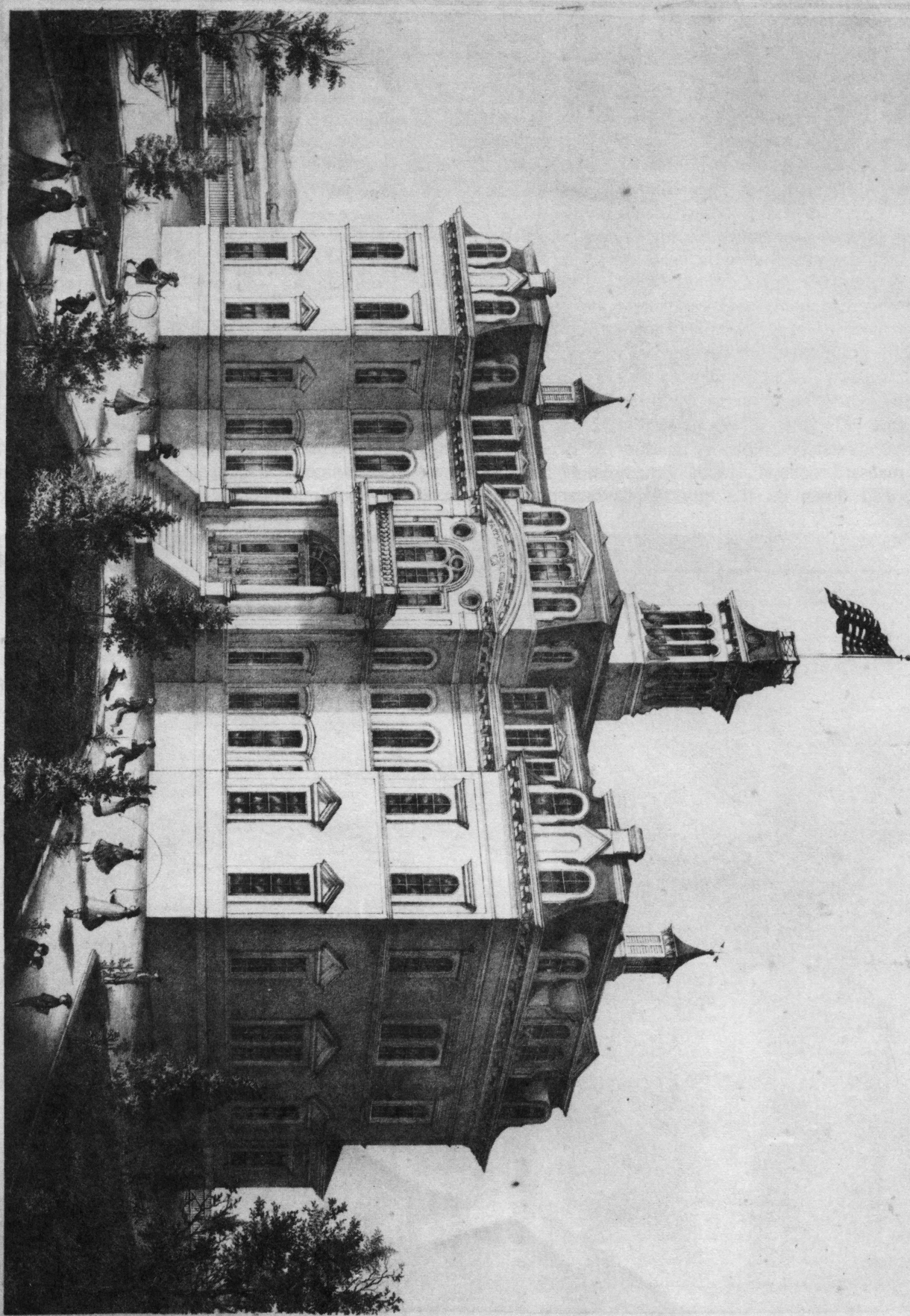
D. Wood, and S. C. Baker, that took their plan to the Grand Lodge of California.

Immediately the lodge brothers responded to the idea which advocated the lodge "incorporate a Homestead Association, purchase a tract of land, donate twenty acres to the Grand Lodge as a site for the Home for Orphans, divide the remainder of the tract into lots for the Homestead to be sold at \$100 each and, after paying for the land and all incidental expenses, the excess of money should be placed in the hands of the Trust Committee of the Grand Lodge and the Director of the Association, to be expended in the erection of suitable buildings on the site denoted for the Home."

While the uncompromising object of the organization was total abolition of legalized liquor traffic throughout the world, it was searching for additional ways to retain the interest of its members. As soon as the idea of an orphanage was accepted by the Grand Lodge, the committee found suitable land in Vallejo and purchased a tract of 103 acres from John Frisbie and A. S. Wood in 1867. The first meeting of the Association was January 22, 1868. The original scheme reserved twenty acres for the buildings and grounds, the remaining



This picture of the Home and Children is believed to have been taken in 1908.



GOOD TEMPLARS' HOME FOR ORPHANS

ERECTED BY THE GOOD TEMPLARS OF CAL.

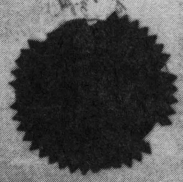
LOCATED NEAR THE CITY OF VALLEJO-1880.

Bancroft Library

Bancroft Library

Gift to the people of the State from the Good Templars of the United States. By the Good Templars of the United States.

*With Compliments
of the
Good Templars of the United States*



eighty-three acres to be divided into 334 shares or lots 50'x130' to be sold for \$100 each. Buyers would actually be donors to a worthy cause as the \$100 price was many times the true market value.

Initially 242 shares were sold, although in most cases full payment was delayed. Among the early purchasers were M. G. H. Greenwood and Mr. N. Smith of Vallejo, Arvilla Chappelle of Sacramento, and the well-known John Bidwell of Chico.

To augment the finances, lodge members were assessed \$1.00 per year. According to annual reports of the Grand Lodge of California, not all monies so collected ended up at the Orphans' Home, but it was budgeted for operating expenses.

Even though not all lots were sold, construction of the Home For Orphans, a name the Good Templars preferred to Orphans' Home, started almost immediately. As no contractor would bid on the contract as issued, it was built with day labor, with Brother E. M. Benjamin hired as architect and builder. He found stone for the foundation very near to the building site, eliminating the heavy expense of hauling it from Napa.

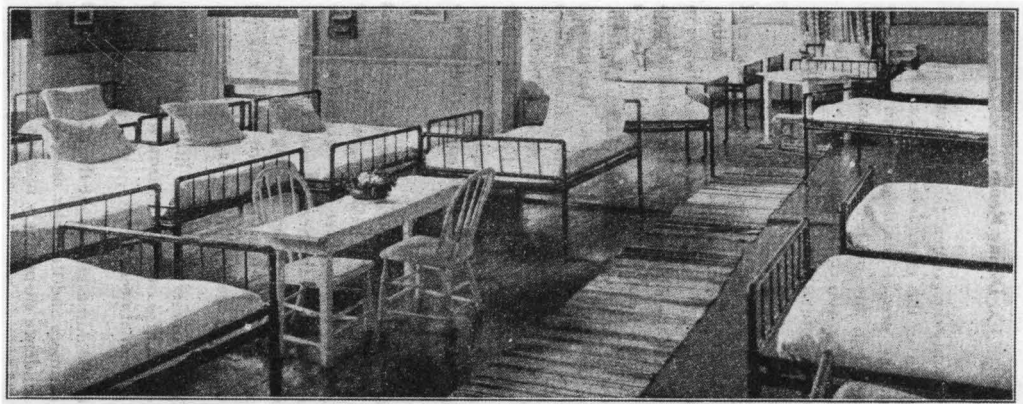
On May 11, 1869, the cornerstone was laid and in a remarkably short time, on October 1, 1870, the home was declared open for admission of children of from eighteen months to sixteen years of age regardless of background.

Within a year there were fifty children in the beautiful mansion on the hill. The large majority were half-orphans, placed by a single parent. A few came from such distant places as Wisconsin and Ohio.

The early years of the orphanage were busy ones. The bare hill was turned into a prosperous farm where vegetables and fruit were raised and where a small dairy supplied milk, cream, and butter for the table. One hundred apple trees, along with other fruit trees, walnuts, and eucalyptuses were planted.

In 1872 a school for the children was begun at the Home in cooperation with the Vallejo school system, which paid a small monthly fee to cover its relatively few children living near the Home and unable to attend the Vallejo schools because of distance and road conditions. The schoolhouse was built on the grounds. Mr. N. Smith was named its principal.

By 1881 enrollment had increased at the Home so that a second, two-story schoolhouse was built including four classrooms and an auditorium. The Good Templars purchased new furniture, established a library, and hired a third teacher. John Bidwell of Chico donated \$1,000 to this effort. Lodge proceedings revealed the curriculum followed that of



"A cozy corner of the girl's dormitory. While impossible to present an adequate view, it is sufficient to emphasize the cleanliness and homey atmosphere that prevails." —Quote from pamphlet believed published in 1917.

the Vallejo City school.

To help with expenses, a farm was operated. The cost of maintaining one child during the year 1883 was reported to be \$108.25. The farm area available was now 130 acres as an additional fifty-two acres had been purchased in 1882 and the homestead lots could be used for this purpose. Apples, peaches, pears, and berries were raised for the Home, while wheat was sold to Starr Mills. Chickens and cows were also part of the establishment. After wheat was no longer grown, hay for the dairy was the principal crop. In 1900 twenty-four cows produced 18,000 gallons of milk valued at \$2700.

Although doctors and nurses attended the Home, epidemics could not be avoided. In 1882 six children out of the 142 at the Home died of illnesses. And in 1893 nine children died during a typhoid epidemic. Among the first doctors were Dr. Levi Frisbie and Dr. Platon Vallejo.

An unfortunate fire destroyed one school building in 1897, but a new one of three rooms was immediately built on the old foundations by Mr. J. R. Aden for \$1,050.

But far offsetting this loss were two important events. First, the Vallejo Board of Education took over operation of the school, later named Roosevelt School, and paid rent, which saved the home \$1,800 a year. Miss Corbett became principal. Twenty of the 170 pupils were from outside the Home. Second, Mr. E. I. Upham of Solano County left a large bequest (one-third of his property) worth \$79,000 to the Orphans of the Home. Approximately half of this was in cash, the remainder being 1337 acres at Collinsville, 241 acres at Thompson Island, and 320 acres near Winters, Yolo County. As a result of the income from this estate, the Home for Orphans was well on the way to becoming

self-supporting. To encourage more large donations, financial management of the Home and its properties was transferred to a Board of Trustees, nine gentlemen from northern California elected for this purpose. A new corporation, known as the Good Templars' Home for Orphans was formed and given the title to the Home property. This was necessary as repairs to the Home had come to over \$15,000, and but \$8,000 had been reserved from the trust fund for this purpose. Creditors demanded payment and would not wait six months for the Grand Lodge to meet in session to authorize a mortgage, but the new corporation was able to obtain a mortgage at once.

In addition to the Board of Trustees, there was a Board of Lady Managers, also from northern California, who hired and supervised the Lady Matron. Matrons changed rather often but records do not reveal reasons for the frequent changes.

The turn-over in children was fairly rapid also, with most staying a year or less. Evidently, single parents and juvenile authorities often entered children in the Home temporarily. Only a small proportion stayed longer than four years.

The Good Templars were conscientious about school attendance for their children but they also had other concerns about preparing the boys and girls for the world of work. Some boys were occasionally "bonded out" or sent out to work in nearby shops or businesses, but the program never seemed to prosper. One idea that was constantly brought up to Grand Lodge members was the purchase of a printing press so that the boys could learn the printing trade and could print and publish all the Lodges' proceedings and records. Again the idea was good but evidently the skills to accomplish this never materialized.

Another plan was to teach a vocation

Juvenile Department.

BAND OF HOPE WORK.



The Grand Lodge, I. O. G. T., of California, offers to furnish, free of charge, to Sunday-schools, or other juvenile organizations desiring to adopt them for use in this jurisdiction, the newly revised Band of Hope rituals, together with the ritual badges. The badges are of German silver, with a safety pin upon the back. Sample copies of the rituals, and badge, or quantities for actual use, will be furnished on application to the

Superintendent of Juvenile Work, Mrs. M. E. Richardson, 1605 Thirteenth Avenue, East Oakland.

The first inclusion of children in temperance organizations goes back to 1847 in Leeds, England, when the first Band of Hope was formed.

centered around telegraphy. The school actually did connect lines with the telegraph system from Vallejo to Sulphur Springs.

One of the more interesting ideas to teach a skill and earn money for the Home resulted in the planting of an acre of mulberry trees with the intention of importing silk worms. Presumably the experiment was unsuccessful since neither thread nor fabric is ever mentioned.

In 1908 Miss Olive Wilson was hired as principal-teacher of Roosevelt School. She helped raise the funds for the electric light fund by spending weeks training children for concerts which raised \$350. The children performed at San Jose, Palo Alto, Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and Los Gatos. Electric lights were installed in the Home in 1909.

Miss Wilson's reputation as a fine teacher has long been a familiar story in Vallejo, and interviews with her former students increased that reputation.

The young boys felt that her firmness in dealing with them was important but they remembered more forcibly her kindness, generosity, and attention. One youngster from an Italian family that spoke no English in its home started school unable to speak English. Miss Wilson spent extra time teaching him English and seeing that he kept up with his class. When he was in the sixth grade Miss Wilson organized her class so that there was a ritual for a flag raising ceremony each morning. One boy was chosen to roll the drum and Miss Wilson saw to it the shy Italian lad won the competition. The proudest moment of his life was the presenting of the colors because his drum spoke eloquently before all the silent students—no Italian accent was revealed. In fact, it was the beginning of his career as a drummer for he played drums in small and big bands until the 1950's. He also recounted the tale that his father was so impressed at his son's skill and Miss Wilson's thoughtfulness that

he built the highest flag pole possible at the Orphanage school so it took the longest drum roll to raise the flag to its apogee.

In addition to helping the foreign-speaking students, she helped their parents with their citizenship papers, even going with them for the final ceremony. Another lad was often invited to have his lunch with Miss Wilson in her private room at the school. Although he enjoyed the good food at the Orphanage, the individual attention of Miss Lundquist and Miss Wilson at a special meal remained a treasured memory.

Both men interviewed expressed genuine appreciation and gratitude for their experience in the small school attached to the "White Prayer on the Hill" as the Vallejoans sentimentally called the Home, and both men were very successful in their careers and in their community life.

Not only did the former students speak highly of the school but they also remembered the Home with affection. One former resident commented enthusiastically on the abundance of fresh fruit and

vegetables, the frequency of orchard treats, and the ample supply of whipped cream. "Soup, vegetables, meat, and dessert, varied each day, is the luncheon. Breakfast and dinner are such as will be found in any home of the better class." If one had to be an orphan or a half-orphan, the Good Templars' Home was a good place to be.

Also vegetables were raised at the school, for Miss Wilson insisted that each child have a garden plot and learn the mysteries of soil and plants, with the vegetables going to the child.

Each child was given certain tasks to perform, either housekeeping or outside jobs, most often performed after breakfast and before school. For the boys the favorite tasks were those relating to care of the horses used on the farm. Only the older boys could do that while the younger lads were delegated brooms or mops, delivery chores, or to gathering eggs. But the jobs seemed a light burden, for there was ample time for games, for being with best friends, and for reading.

Musical entertainment and programs were often given for the children; a non-denominational Sunday school lesson was given each Friday night consisting mostly of Bible stories with no theological or didactic emphasis.

In 1915, the orphans were given a day at the fabulous Panama Pacific Exposition in San Francisco. Pictures show the children lined up at the wharf in San Francisco with flags and banners announcing Vallejo Day. There was more excitement than anyone had counted on, though, when at night while leaving, the ferry carrying the children struck a rock and was damaged to the extent that each child had to be lowered by ropes from the ferry, while searchlights from the exposition lighted the scene. No one was injured.

The boys also remembered the free



"The schoolhouses are shown nestling under the protective shade of the Eucalyptus grove. They are less than 150 feet from the Home proper. The County of Solano supplies the teachers." —Quote from pamphlet believed published in 1917.

shows given before Christmas at the theater in downtown Vallejo. It cost other patrons five cents but the Orphans were admitted free. Outside the theater, they remembered, were men who wheeled carts filled with hot oysters for sale. The Strand Theater offered free movies to the orphans each week, and the Home allowed them to go as often as the Home felt appropriate.

Even with the Lodge's tight framework of administration for the home, each month inspectors would visit their charge, often as a group, sometimes singly. Each month they signed the daily register which had a column reserved for comments. Over the years the names of well-known Vallejoans appear in an official capacity, —John Frey, O. H. Hilton, George Edgcombe, Mr. and Mrs. Hussey, Wm. Jones, Aggie McKnight Wilson, Edith McKnight. Typical comments are: "I wish every Good Templar could visit this place." "A very fine house—good enough for any one." "A very pleasant home." "God bless all orphans." "Very much delighted." "Keep humble." "Feed my lambs." Among comments reflecting the philosophy of the Templars were: "Vote for prohibition." "Dare to be right." "Work for temperance."

Sometime during the life of the register some lads from the Home added few comments, a few profanities, and a bit of scribbling over other comments, revealing perfectly normal boy activities. Some con-

tributions twist the heart a bit when one sees in small childish scrawl "Jack Alford, age 8, lives here." And further on in the register in the same writing "Jack Alford, age 10 lives here." In another margin in small print "George Ziegler was a boy in this home."

In addition to officials there were many other visitors. On Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years the W.C.T.U. gave the children their dinners. On Washington's Birthday, Lincoln's Birthday, and the Fourth of July, the Red Men, the K. of P., the Veterans of G.A.R., the B.P.O.E., and the band from Mare Island came up the hill to make these days resplendent. There was a steady stream of visitors supportive of the Home's effort to make life interesting for the youngsters. In the official register there are several references to members of the USS Independence.

Many people and organizations gave gifts to the children. Among a long list of donations received in 1915 were 1000 lbs. of fresh salmon, 1000 tubes of tooth paste, and 15 gallons of ice cream.

In 1916 the B.P.O.E. sent fifty-three children by railroad to Santa Cruz for a one-week stay at homes of Elks. Southern Pacific charged but \$59, a much reduced fare. At Santa Cruz they enjoyed the concessions at the beach free of charge. Reports of the activities sanctimoniously recorded that the girls bathed in the surf

in white gowns.

Attendance at the Home reached its peak in 1893, with 211 children. It remained in the neighborhood of 200 children until 1905 and then gradually fell to 113 in 1909. As times changed and other means of providing care developed, the need for the Home had diminished.

Then two incidences occurred that hastened the demise of the school. On September 18, 1914, the nude body of an eight-year old boy was discovered in a crawl space in the attic. He had been missing for thirteen days. A coroner's jury found no explanation for the death and recommended further investigation by authorities. No charges were brought.

Not much later the superintendent at the Home resigned and started up his own school in Vallejo, taking some of the boys with him.

In March of 1919 the Home was back in the headlines as the replacement superintendent was accused of molesting a twelve-year old girl, and the *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* suggested that as many as twelve other girls had had similar experiences. The superintendent resigned. When convicted in May, he received the indeterminate sentence of from one year to life in San Quentin. His lawyer immediately appealed. Two years later a retrial was granted. But the girl involved decided she would not go through another trial and refused to admit she remembered ever having preferred charges. The district attorney, unable to change her determination, in May, 1922, agreed to dismissal of the action. The superintendent was cleared of all charges, but he had spent some time in prison.

In view of the adverse publicity and the decreased need for the Home, the Home was closed July 1, 1919. Among the factors contributing to the decrease in available dependent children were the homes carried on by fraternal orders, the working out of the "Mothers' Pension Act," the Native Daughters Home Movement, and the interest and zeal of the State Board of Charities and Board of Control.

After plans to convert the Home to an apartment house fell through, the Home was rented in 1923 to the Vallejo-Mare Island Golf and Country Club, the first year's rental being \$50 per month. At first the three-story home was used as a club house. Then it was razed, and the old school house was used as the club house and professional's headquarters. The foundations of the Home still remain under the home of Mayor Terry Curtola, 50 La Crescenda. By 1935 developers had begun to chip away at the golf course, and about 1938 the golf course moved out to Blue Rock Springs.



The two buildings nearest the golf tee were the schoolhouse of the old Roosevelt school. To the rear and behind a row of automobiles is the old Home building, still standing in this February 21, 1930 picture.

Vallejo—The County Seat and The City and County of Vallejo

by Thomas Lucy

In a special election in November, 1873, a majority of the voters in Solano County voted for the removal of the county seat to Vallejo. Other sections of Solano County, angry because Fairfield lost the county seat, had a bill introduced in the senate to separate Vallejo from Solano County, creating the City and County of Vallejo, leaving Vallejo alone unto itself. The bill passed the senate on March 13, and assembly on March 23rd, 1874.

The first county seat of Solano County was located in Benicia. Benicia continued to hold that honor until September 2, 1858, at which time an election was held that made Fairfield the county seat. It was believed that Vallejo played a part in the defeat of Benicia, for bitterness still remained over the loss of the state capital to that city.

On June 13, 1873, the following advertisement appeared in the Vallejo Evening Chronicle.

At the June 14th meeting John B. Frisbie speaking to a large crowd, outlined the advantages of Vallejo over Suisun as the county seat. (Newspapers did not always distinguish between Fairfield and Suisun.) He alluded to the number of visitors the county seat would bring to Vallejo. Frisbie further stated that the city would donate land for county buildings, the city park if necessary, and that he would donate land willingly without fee.¹

An editorial in the *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* on November 14th outlined the reasons for the county seat's removal to Vallejo:

1. It is evident that Fairfield cannot be the permanent county seat of a great and growing county like Solano. Accommodations are growing worse as the town of Fairfield continues to decay, and there is no hope of improvement. We cannot compare the dreary, treeless plain upon which our county seat is located with the

pleasant location of other counties without a feeling of shame.

2. Assuming a change in the location of the county seat must ultimately come, we say it should come now.

3. A line of railroad traverses the entire county terminating at Vallejo. Communication by water can be had from Rio Vista, Benicia and Collinsville to Vallejo without interruption by flood or impassable roads.

4. Solano County taxpayers residing in San Francisco and elsewhere would best be accommodated in Vallejo.

The only two arguments in favor of Fairfield are these:

1. That it is near the geographical center of the county.

2. The expense of removal.

The first of these reasons was good at the time when the county seat was removed to Fairfield, when people came from all parts of the county in carriages or on horseback. New means of travel are now available. As a rule county seats are not located in the geographical centers of other counties. As for the cost of removal, the City of Vallejo and its citizens have bound themselves by proper guarantees to furnish free of cost suitable offices for county offices, courts and jail until permanent buildings are built.

On June 19th the citizens of Green Valley in convention assembled were unable to determine the best material for the county seat to sit in, Waterman's adobe or Frisbie's glue (Waterman and Frisbie were the founders of Fairfield and Vallejo respectively).²

The Board of Supervisors met on October 7th on the matter of the petition for the county seat removal election. Opponents questioned the legality of names on the petition, and that the petition was procured prior to the previous general election, claiming that fact invalidated it. The board was informed that there were 1,420 names on the petition, 1,068 being the one-third required.³ The board met in an afternoon session on the 7th to compare the names on the petition with the Great Register. After half the names were checked, only 21 were not legal voters.⁴

On October 10th the Board of Supervisors ordered an election on November 26 on removal of the county seat to Vallejo.⁵

Vallejo promised to donate land for county buildings. The City of Vallejo pledged to use all its influence with the Board of Supervisors to restrict the expenditure for the erection of county buildings (which will be the sole expenditure of the county) to \$50,000.⁶

In the election on November 26th the removal of the county seat to Vallejo was

VALLEJO COUNTY SEAT IMPORTANT TO ALL all persons favorable to the REMOVAL OF THE COUNTY SEAT —to— VALLEJO

are requested to meet at Farragut Hall
on Saturday evening June 14th at
8 o'clock. The matter will be fully
discussed and the opportunity
presented to those who have not
signed the petition to put their
names down. Every person
interested in the prosperity of
Vallejo is expected to be present.

By order of the Board of Trustees
JOHN B. FRISBIE — president

approved by the majority. Following were the official election returns:⁷

Precinct	Vallejo	Suisun
Vallejo-1st ward	1127	19
Vallejo-2nd ward	874	36
Vallejo-3rd ward	99	4
Benicia	74	148
Green Valley	46	52
Suisun	2	553
Vacaville	21	226
Dixon	24	295
Maine Prairie	1	92
Fremont	2	75
Rio Vista	2	130
Denverton	2	113
Montezuma	0	81
Elmira	5	115
Total	2279	1939

Votes reported for Suisun actually were votes retaining Fairfield as the county seat.

The Board of Supervisors fixed February 9, 1874 as the day after which Vallejo shall be the county seat.⁸

On January 22, 1874, in the District Court of the 7th Judicial District in and for the County of Solano, the people of the State of California, James Pressly plaintiff vs. J.F. Cloutman et al defendants a demurrer (plea for dismissal) was presented.

The demurrer was a plea for dismissal of the following complaint by the supporters of Fairfield:

1. The court has no jurisdiction of the subject of the action.
2. The plaintiff has no legal capacity to sue.
3. There is a defect in the petition of the plaintiff.
4. The allegation that alleges that in the said election the different Board of Election officers in the three precincts of Vallejo Township allowed and permitted 65 votes to be cast, the names not being in the Great Register of Solano County on that day. The next allegation concerns 25 votes cast in Vallejo by persons absent from Solano County on that day, and that 395 votes were cast, allowed and confirmed and returned to the poll lists in Vallejo as having voted therein on that day and that the names corresponding to the said votes and returned as those of persons casting the same are those parties who were absent from Solano County on that day.

In answer the defendants denied that the election was illegally conducted or that the Board of Election officers of the three precincts of Vallejo allowed 65 votes to be cast, the names not being in the Great

Register or that they allowed 25 votes to be cast by persons absent from the county and denied 395 were absent from the county.⁹

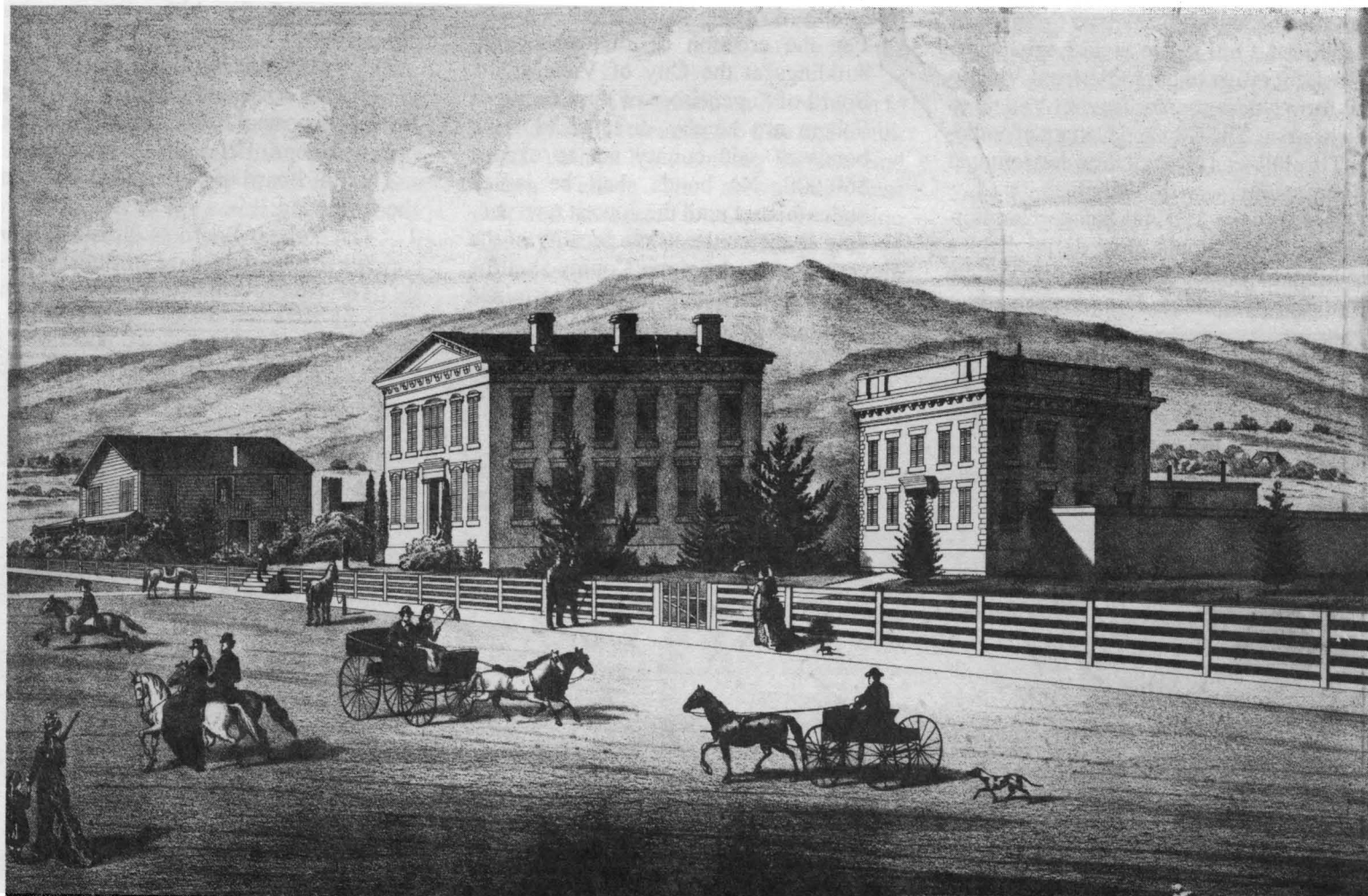
Judge Wallace ruled in favor of Fairfield and set March 19th to hear the case on removal of the county seat.¹⁰

On February 1, 1874, Judge Wallace denied an application for a temporary injunction against removal of the county seat to Vallejo.

The *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* condemned the state press as reporting as true that 603 illegal votes were cast in Vallejo without mentioning that over 300 illegal votes were cast in Fairfield.

The Vallejo Board of Trustees prepared to receive the county archives and surveyed the town for eligible buildings for county offices. Their findings included:

1. The Odd Fellows Hall for a court room and county offices for \$125.00 per month rent.
2. Two stores owned by E.H. Sawyer on the corner of Georgia and Santa Clara for offices of recorder and assessor.
3. An apartment in Mrs. Roloff's building for surveyor.
4. For the treasurer's office one of the two bank buildings. General Frisbie tendered accommodations at the Vallejo Savings and Commercial Bank



Court House, Jail, and Offices, Fairfield.

Thompson and West, Historical Atlas of Solano County, 1877

free of charge.

The *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* reported on February 13th that a group was lobbying in Sacramento to cut Vallejo off from Solano County without a shilling and telling the legislators of "Fairfield's wrongs and Vallejo's wickedness."

The *Benicia Tribune* reported that a majority of the citizens of Benicia preferred to remain with the old county rather than be attached to the skirts of Vallejo. The paper continued that it would be better for Vallejo to be a county by itself thus benefiting the hungry politicians of Vallejo.¹²

The *Antioch Ledger* proposed a new county to be made up of stolen pieces of Solano, Sacramento, San Joaquin and Contra Costa counties. The plan of course contemplated Antioch as the county seat.

E.H. Sawyer proposed to lease his brick building at the corner of Georgia and Santa Clara Streets to the county for \$250.00 per month for county offices. His building would house the recorder's, assessor's and county clerk's offices. The judge's chambers, sheriff's office, jury room, and court room would also be in the building. The jail would be in the basement. The other county offices would be in the Vallejo city hall.¹³

The *Yolo Mail* reported on February 20th that the citizens of Solano County had introduced a bill in the State Legislature, a dreadful effort to cut loose from Vallejo and form a new county, leaving Vallejo to be known as The City and County of Vallejo. This bill was in retaliation for removal of the county seat to Vallejo.¹⁴

On February 21st the Senate Committee on Counties and Boundaries held a meeting to consider setting off Vallejo from Solano County. The representatives

in favor of the division submitted to the committee a petition signed by 1,700 person. Leader of the divisionites was L.B. Mizner, a Solano pioneer, who addressed the committee in his windiest vein, and consumed the whole evening and patience of the committee. When he concluded John B. Frisbie addressed the committee in behalf of Vallejo briefly. Frisbie requested a postponement which was granted.

In covering the story the *San Francisco Bulletin* reported that the creation of the County of Vallejo would be a permanent blot on the legislation of the state. The bill before the legislature is based on the principle that when a town at one end of a county gains the county seat in accordance with the law, the people in the other districts can cut off the victorious place and compel it to set up as an independent county by itself. It would be better to transfer the county seat back to Fairfield or transfer Vallejo to Napa County.¹⁵

On February 25, 1874, Senate Bill 301 was introduced by Senator McCune. The bill was titled "An act to divide the county of Solano and to erect within the present limits of said county a new county to be known as Vallejo County."¹⁶

The legislature notified the Solano Board of Supervisors that the people of the State of California represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:

For the erection of suitable county buildings at the City of Vallejo, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Solano are hereby directed to issue bonds of said county not to exceed \$60,000. No bonds shall be issued under this act until the contest now pending in the courts as the locality of the county seat of Solano County shall be finally decided and Vallejo determined

to be the county seat of Solano County.¹⁷

The Sacramento reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote "Solano people are active in urging the division of that county and setting off Vallejo into a county by itself. While it is considered that Vallejo has not treated Fairfield or Suisun in a generous or fair spirit it is not likely that the propriety of punishing Vallejo by making her bear the burden of a county government can be impressed upon members."¹⁸

The Board of Supervisors meeting in Fairfield voted to meet in Vallejo on March 3rd.

The *Sonoma Democrat* reported on February 28th "An appeal to the prejudices existing against Vallejo throughout the state and probably among some members of the legislature on account of political iniquities practiced by the government officials on Mare Island and their siders and abettors at Fairfield, prior to the inauguration of the present ballot system (a reference to the infamous Vallejo Tape Worm ticket), is made but it is not probable that the requisite number of legislators will be found who are willing to gratify their prejudice at the expense of the innocent taxpayers of the City and Township of Vallejo who would be bankrupted by the enactment of the bill as now constituted."¹⁹

The Board of Supervisors met in Vallejo City Hall on the afternoon of March 3rd for the purpose of examining different accommodations offered for county offices.²⁰

The full Board of Supervisors accepted the following:²¹

1. The Vallejo Board of Trustees room for use by the Board of Supervisors.
2. The room formerly designed for the



This 1912 photograph shows the former Vallejo City Hall where the Board of Supervisors met March 3rd, 1874, and found rooms for several county offices. Today it is occupied by E & J Travel Services.

city surveyor was chosen for the district attorney.

3. The room occupied by the city recorder in the city hall was accepted for use by the assessor and tax collector.
4. The meeting room of the Frisbie Engine Company was accepted as an office of the sheriff.
5. An apartment on the second floor of Mrs. Roloff's building was accepted as the office of the county surveyor.

The Senate Committee on Counties and County Boundaries met to hear the argument on the proposal for setting off Vallejo from Solano County. The argument in favor of the division was that Vallejo and the rest of Solano County had "fallen out"; that the people of the two sections were very bitter and hostile toward each other; that it was impossible for them to live together owing to this incompatibility of sentiment; that it would be better for both sections if they were divided. John B. Frisbie spoke for two hours giving reasons why the proposed bill should not pass. It was a most masterly presentation of Vallejo's case and even surprised those best acquainted with the speaker's logical and argumentative powers. He denounced as an outrage without parallel the proposition to compel one little township to assume the responsibilities of a county government and force its people to take up the burden of its maintenance. He alluded to a statement by Mizner in his speech before the committee that Vallejo had "arbitrarily" taken the county seat. Frisbie pointed out that Vallejo was chosen as the county seat by a majority of the voters just as Mizner was elected to the Legislature.²²

The *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* reported on March 7th that Frank Springer with his assistants commenced the work of packing up the books and records of the county clerk's office preparatory to their removal to Vallejo. When the workmen commenced to take down the shelving in the office, Judge Wells entered a protest against the proceeding on the ground that it was an appurtenance of the building, and that the building belonged to Waterman. This was of course a "cold-blooded bluff." The article continued "The workmen are now making boxes for the archives of the county clerk's office and we are glad the work is being prosecuted regardless of consequences."

The March 7th issue of the *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* also reported "The latest report from Suisun develops a fresh obstacle in the way of removal. Our readers must not laugh while we relate what it is; the Divisionites as a last resort have made close corner on the drays and other conveyances which are available in

Suisun and no means of transportation to the railroad can be procured. We anticipate that vehicles will have to be sent up from Vallejo."

On March 9th the archives were ready for shipment to Vallejo but a number of "hot heads" in Suisun formed a group to prevent removal by force if necessary. Sheriff Perkins prevailed upon them to act within the law. On the same day workmen commenced packing-up the assessor's, district attorney's and surveyor's offices for removal to Vallejo. It was reported that four out of five members of the Senate Committee on Counties and County Boundaries would vote in favor of division.

On March 10th the Senate Committee on Counties and County Boundaries reported in favor of setting off Vallejo from Solano County. The *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* reported that "This will be the nastiest struggle of the session—a sort of Chicago stinkpot warfare, in which each side will do its level worst."²⁴

Frank Springer on March 11th with his assistants went up to Fairfield with ropes, blocks and other appliances for removing safes and other heavy equipment to Vallejo. During the day they received threatening remonstrances. They were offered \$50.00 to go home. In the evening some unknown parties broke into the station house in Fairfield and cut the rope into two foot lengths and made off with the blocks.²⁵

An attempt was made on March 12th to amend the Bill creating the City and County of Vallejo by including Benicia and Green Valley. The amendment was defeated. Senator McCune of Solano County stated the sooner Vallejo was set off the better. The *Alta Californian* in San Francisco reported that Vallejo was the better location for a county seat because the archives would be more accessible to San Francisco lawyers. The *Alta Californian* continued that if Vallejo was set off it would be only one-third the size of the City and County of San Francisco and only one-twentieth the size of Marin County, and that the legislators of the state would be disgraced by permitting petty feelings to govern its action.²⁶

On March 13th the Senate passed the "INSULT BILL" dividing Solano County by a vote of 20 to 10. The *Republican* reported that the County Clerk in moving his office to Vallejo "has committed an act of vandalism wholly unjustifiable and highly reprehensible."²⁷

On March 16th the Senate Bill came up in the Assembly.²⁸ The *San Francisco Bulletin* reported on March 17th that the battleground shifted from the Senate to the Assembly. As the battle goes on the contest becomes more fierce. The *Vallejo*

Evening Chronicle reported that the Divisionites were in Sacramento in great force, every train and steamer bring additional delegations to swell their force. By the lavish use of money they have secured every member of the lobby to urge their bill. The celebrated professional Nap Broughton has taken the contract to carry the fight through for them.²⁹

On March 20th the Assembly postponed action on the Senate Bill. Mizner, the long-winded and unextinguishable, was there speaking falsehoods. General Frisbie replied asking for justice and to relieve Vallejo from the odium of slander. C.B. Denio of Vallejo spoke only 10 minutes and utterly demolished Mizner's efforts.³⁰

The Bill in the Assembly to set-off Vallejo passed 45-28. The *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* reported on March 24th "A more damnable outrage than that committed by the House yesterday was never perpetrated under the color of law upon a people. It is an outrage such as a despot monarch of the old world would inflict upon any portion of his subjects. If the people of Vallejo had been guilty of crimes ten times as great as have been charged the punishment which our Legislature has decreed would not be the less infamous."³¹

The Divisionites held a joyous celebration after the Assembly passed the bill separating Vallejo from Solano County. Their joy soon turned to dismay when a defect was found in the bill. The Division Bill placed Vallejo in the Seventeenth Senatorial District which was composed of Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties. The State Constitution required that counties forming a Senatorial District must be contiguous. The Senate Bill was unconstitutional.³²

The Divisionites were demoralized. The lobby, once so powerful as to capture the legislature, was scattered to the four winds. The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported it was understood that in consequence of the error in the Division Bill by putting Vallejo in the 17th District the Governor would veto the bill on constitutional grounds, which he did on March 27th.

The Divisionites changed their tactics and had a bill introduced in the House to move the County Seat back to Fairfield.³³ The bill passed both houses on March 28th, the Assembly 51-15 and the Senate 21-8. The governor signed the bill to remove the County Seat from Vallejo to Fairfield on March 30th.³⁴

The *Vallejo Evening Chronicle* concluded SO MOTE IT BE—AMEN!



Cement, 1902-1927

by Ruth Kilkenny

The City of Cement covered 900 acres and was founded in 1902. Today it is called "Cement Hill," which lies northeast of the Fairfield City limits and northwest of Travis Air Force Base.

Once it was a bustling, booming city of 500 employees who toiled around the clock to dig a mineral treasure from Mother Earth. This demanded housing for those who had families, so cottages were built for company officials, which housed the executives and foremen on the "front street." The "back street" consisted mostly of what we would call the "minority" of those days—namely Italians, Portuguese, and Spanish. I am sorry to say that the "front street" kids (streets and sidewalks were dirt) would have their share of "battle" with the "back street" kids. Since our backyards were back-to-back, we would make our own forts out of corrugated tin sheeting and would exchange rocks, clods, or anything that was available at the time. We never held any malice toward them, though, and by that

evening you would probably find us all playing ball, run sheep run, one foot off the gutter, sardines, or marbles together. Each yard was enclosed by a wooden picket fence and all of the homes were painted red.

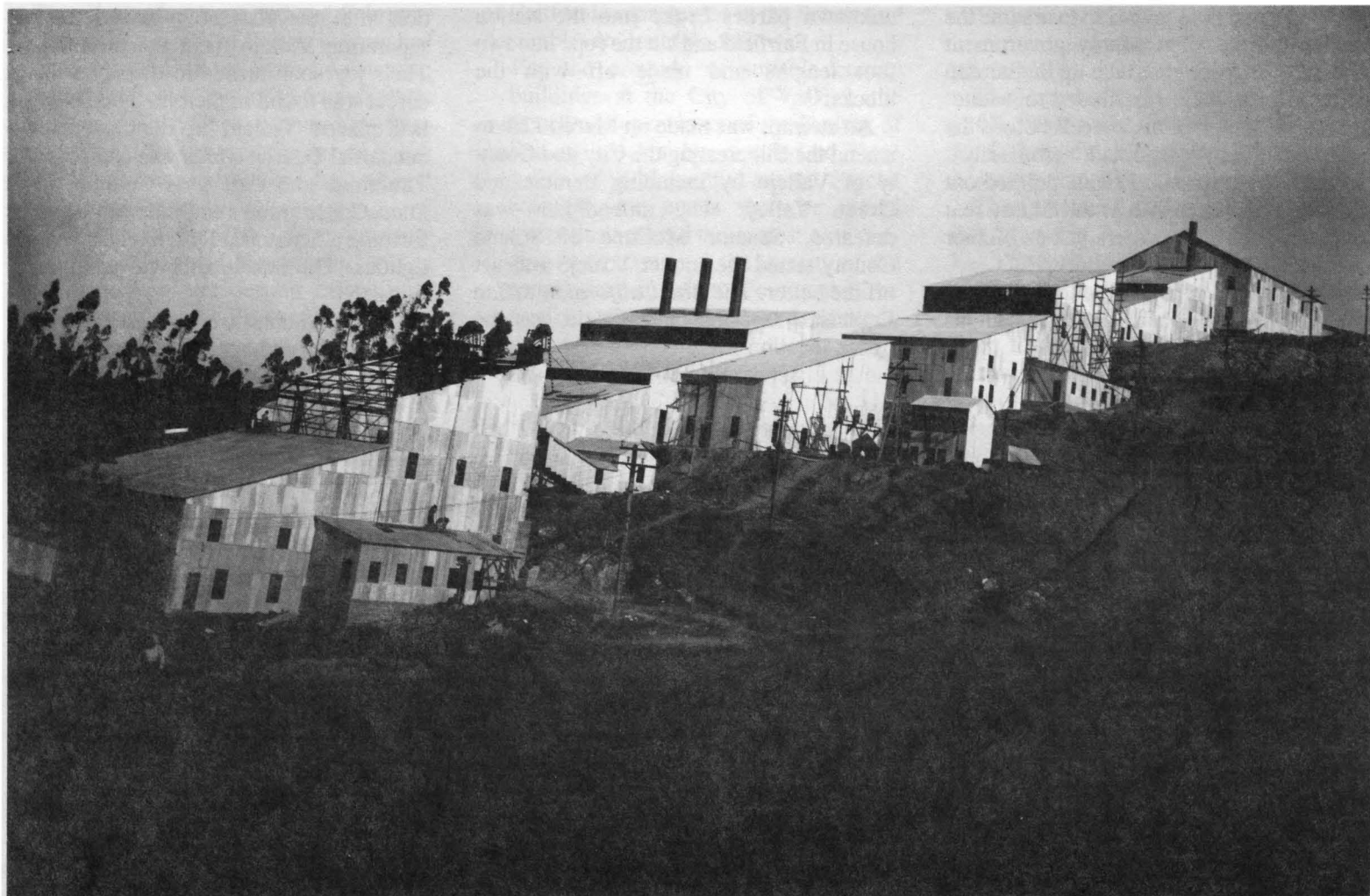
Other buildings that were erected to serve the town were a post office, hospital, a two-room school house (one teacher hired by the company for grades 1—4 and the other by the district for grades 5—8), boarding house (for serving meals to single men), bunkhouses, a livery stable, grocery store, butcher shop, hotel, and a "company cottage," very nicely landscaped and always kept in readiness in case the "big shot" (company superintendent) visited.

When the "old mill" ran out of cement material, which it did in 1917, the Portland Cement Company built a "new mill" south of town and relocated the office headquarters to the schoolhouse to be nearer the work. The vacated office was made into a two-room schoolhouse and an auditorium which was used for town

meetings, church, and floating shows. Once in a while a drummer would come into town and would set up movie equipment, and anybody who could afford a dime could enjoy the movie. Looking back upon it now, the shows always seemed to consist of monkeys.

The new office shared its building with a laboratory where chemists would test the cement, an upstairs office for the engineers, a post office, and a telephone office. If you wanted to call someone locally all you would have to do was turn the crank on your phone and when the operator answered you would tell her whose house you wanted and she would plug it in. I have to add that the company did not charge for the phones, the electricity, or even the light bulbs, all you would have to do is go to the office and get a replacement free. Behind the office were a baseball diamond and tennis courts.

The first hotel was razed by fire in 1906, and a more elaborate hotel was built in its place. It consisted of two stories, with a veranda running across the front of each story, and the porches were lined with barrel back chairs. Directly in front of the hotel was a beautifully landscaped park. Pepper and acacia trees were predominant. The hotel accommodated 175 guests. It



When the "old mill" ran out of the cement material in 1917, this "new Mill" was built. Newspapers placed production of cement at 6,000 barrels per day.

boasted a barber shop, pool tables, kitchen, a huge ballroom, and a dining room, where once a year a "Grand Ball" was held.

The ball was a gala affair. The local residents acted as hosts and were allowed to invite their out-of-town friends. Many came from San Francisco. The charge per couple was \$5.00 and that included a full course dinner and dancing to a live orchestra. Children of employees dressed in their best were allowed to pass out dance programs.

The company not only sponsored the Grand Ball, but once a year it held a "Smoker"—better known today as a prize fight—in the hotel. Thousands commuted to Cement Hill to attend this function.

Behind the hotel there was a laundry room whose boiler made steam for the laundry and heat for the hotel.

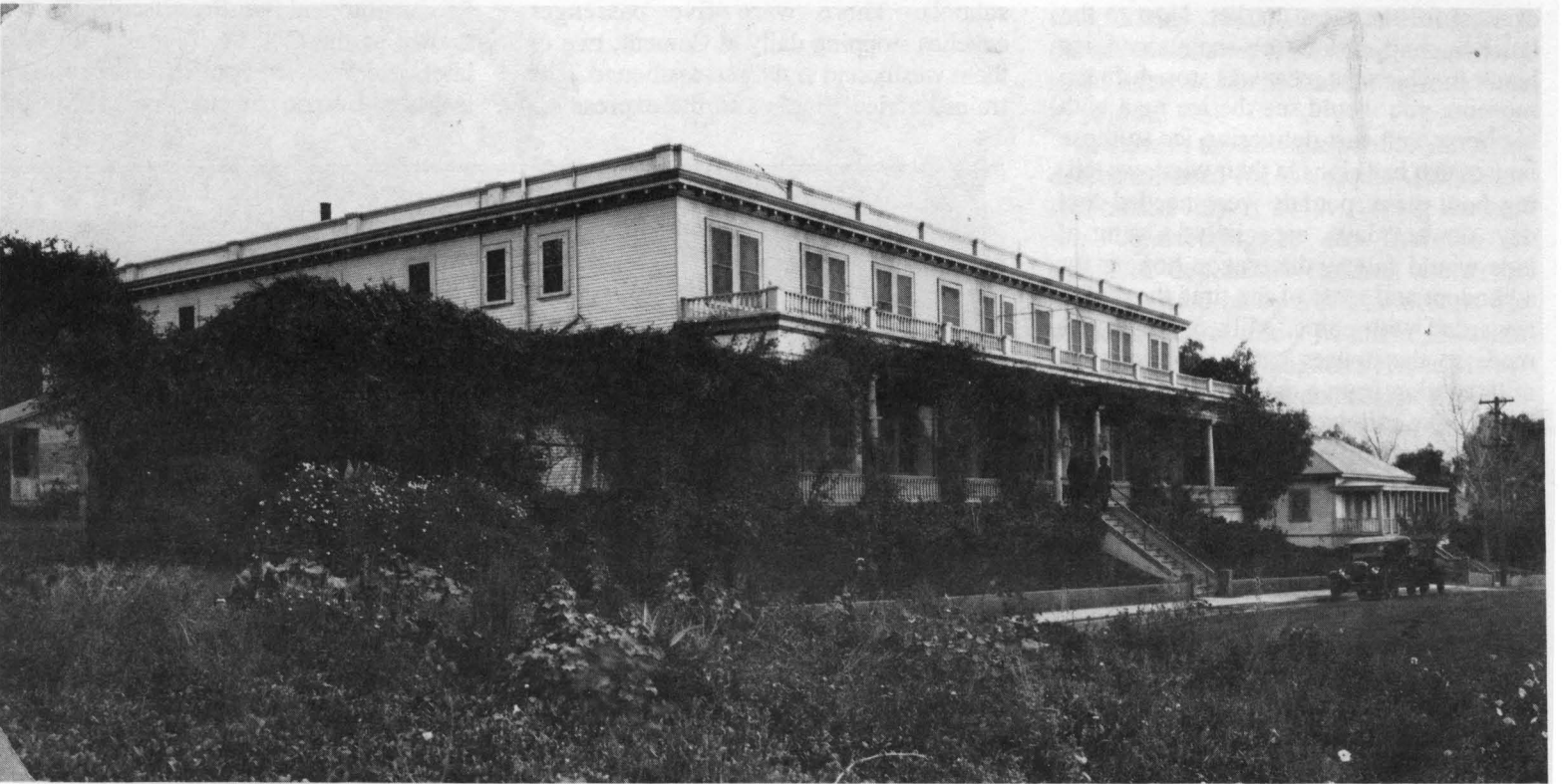
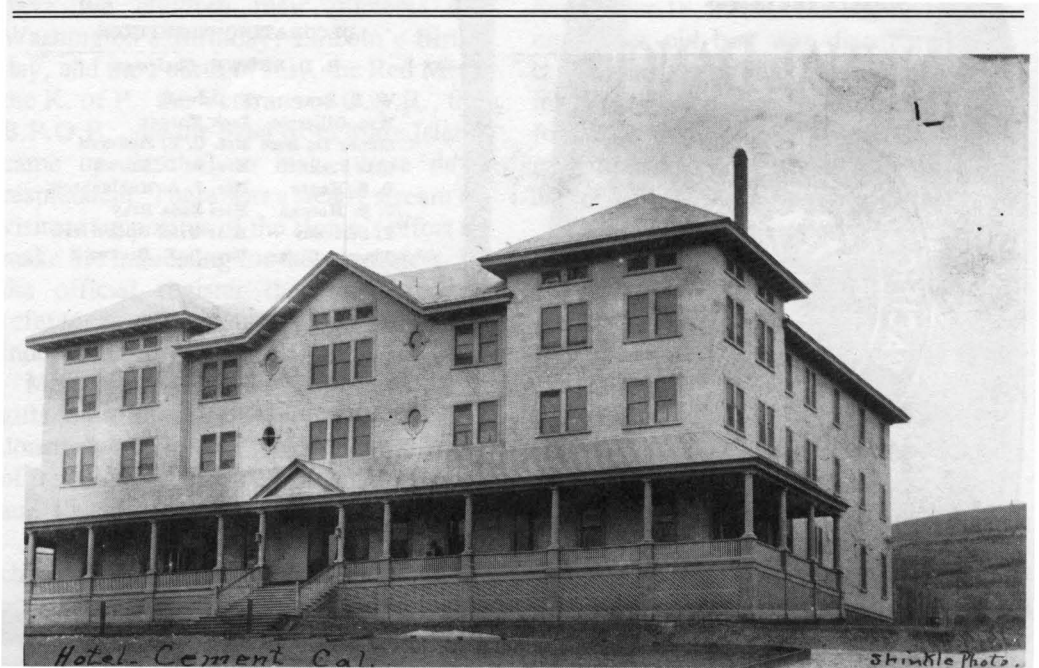
The hospital was right across the street from the hotel. A full time doctor was hired by the company and everybody was entitled to medical care any time at no expense—this service included wives and children. Usually only emergencies were taken care of—men injured on the job or a child hurt at play.

Directly across from the hospital was the fire house, which was maintained by volunteer firemen. Adjoining the fire house was the grocery store, which also

included general merchandise. It was always filled with kids with their noses pressed against the enclosed glass candy counter, trying to decide on what they wanted to spend their pennies. Soda pop was a big item too, but that sold for five cents. If you were lucky sometimes one of the many bachelors would take pity on you and treat you to a bottle. Shoes, working clothes, garden tools, sewing necessities,

pickles, and crackers in barrels were a few of the many items that were sold in the store. When you went shopping all you had to do was tell the grocer what you wanted and he would get it for you and bring it all back to the counter. Hardly anything was paid for in cash—mostly everyone ran a charge account.

On the lower floor of the grocery was the butcher shop. The company operated



This hotel was built at Cement to replace the one pictured above which burned in 1906. Here officials from the San Francisco headquarters of Pacific Portland Cement, their guests, and visiting dignitaries were entertained and amused.



Behind the hotel on the left, and a few large buildings in the center, stretch rows of cottages — the City of Cement.

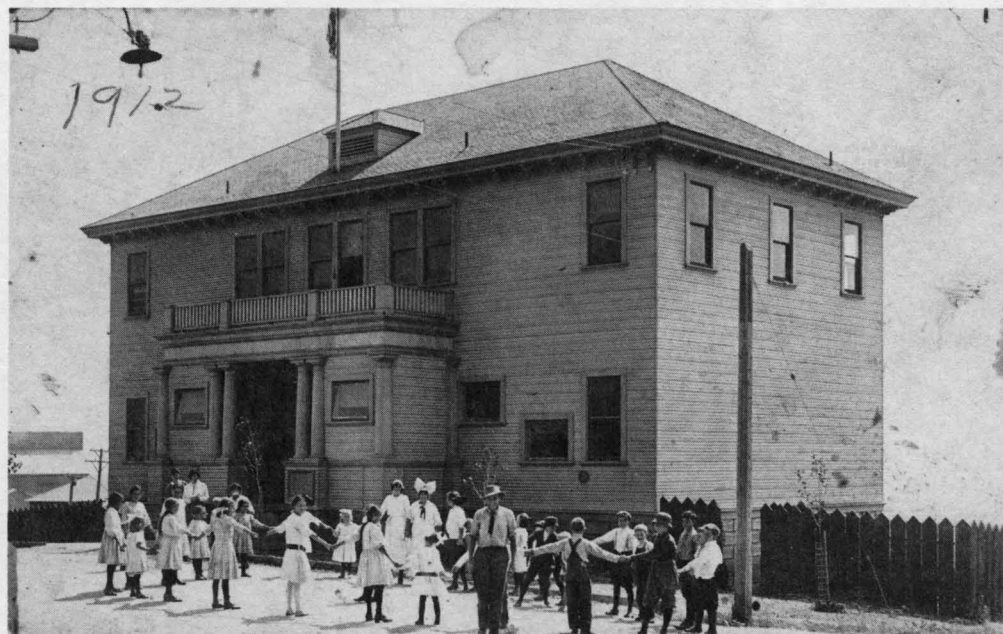
Cement had its own electric plant, with one and a half miles of electric railways built by the company to connect the mills with the rock quarries and the twelve kilns of the processing plant. My uncle, Will Stevenson, was the engineer who built both the old and new mills.

The local folk also took great pride in their baseball teams, which competed with each other each week. They also competed against neighboring towns, and nine times out of ten they came out ahead. My father was offered a chance to play professional baseball with the old San Francisco Seals, but he had to refuse, as he would not have been able to return to his Cement job after the season ended.

It was a town that made its own amusement. The Fourth of July was a big day for young and old alike. Everybody in town participated in tugs of war, sack races, foot races, and other contests. The lucky winners were all awarded prizes.

The children created much of their own entertainment with the world they found around the company town. Since the company had its own railroad, adventurous youths took the small hand cars and rolled them down the tracks, pumping madly to work up speed. More dangerous were their escapades on the high trestles as they jumped from cross-beam to cross-beam.

There were several deserted pits left when materials had been quarried out and

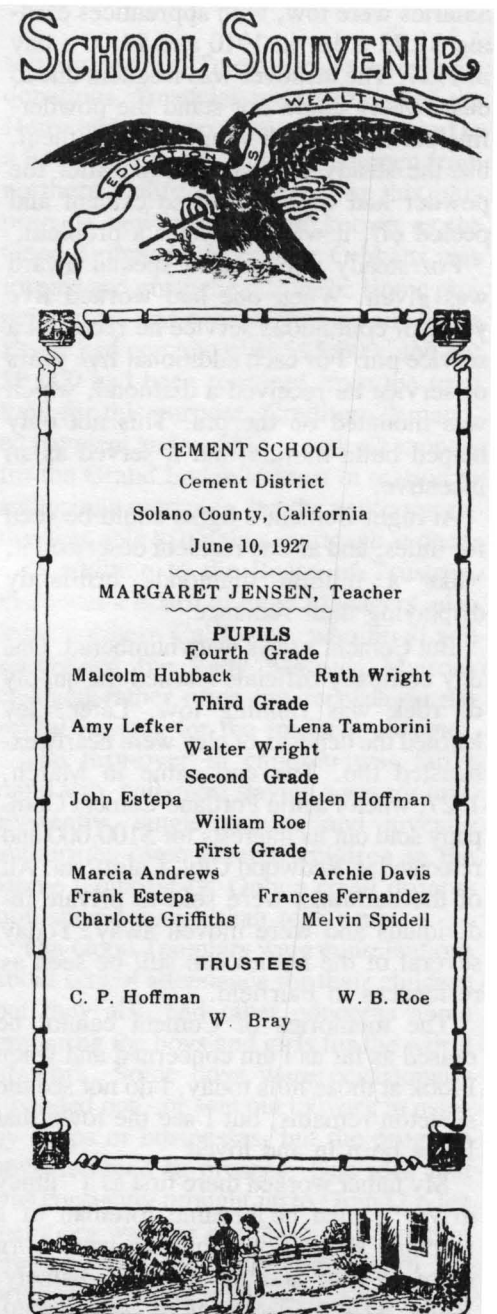


This schoolhouse, later became the offices and post office of the mill.

these gradually filled with water. Would-be sailors built rickety rafts that sometimes broke and deposited the youngsters in the muddy water but never discouraged the brave.

It was exciting when airplanes made their first appearance in central Solano county. Whenever a plane came over during school hours, teachers permitted the students to go outside and watch until it disappeared. One day a light plane landed in a nearby field and was tied down for the night. During the night a cow strolled up to the plane and calmly chewed off the fragile wings of the craft.

At Christmas time the children entertained the parents at the school auditorium with a skit and at the program Santa made his appearance. A month before Christmas



The above is from a six-page card given as a school souvenir. Other pages contain the poem "The Close of School," decorations, and a few admonitions.

each child was asked to write on a piece of paper three things he would most like for Christmas, and one of these he was assured of getting on that night from Santa Claus, a gift of the company.

A special day of picnicking was also enjoyed on Putah Creek for all who wanted to go. With the cars that were available in those days that was quite a trek as well as a treat—also another gift of the paternal company.

Working conditions at first were rigid with the men working twelve-hour shifts. This pattern continued until President Wilson introduced the eight-hour day, after which the mills changed to three shifts per day. A three room apartment rented for \$12.00 a month, and groceries cost the average family about \$40.00 a month. Salaries were low, with apprentices earning \$1.75 a day in 1910 and \$4.00 a day in 1927. The turnover was frequent due to dust. Many could not stand the powder-fine particles which would cling to them, but the steady personnel found after the powder had once turned to cement and peeled off, it was no longer a problem.

For steady personnel a special award was given. When one had worked five years of continuous service he received a service pin. For each additional five years of service he received a diamond, which was mounted on the pin. This not only helped build morale, but it served as an incentive.

At night Cement's lights could be seen for miles, and as one resident described it, "like a million diamonds brilliantly displaying their radiance."

But Cement's days were numbered. One day company officials learned the supply of rock was running low. Later they learned the deposits of clay were nearly exhausted too. The end came in March, 1927, when Pacific Portland Cement Company sold out its interests for \$100,000 and relocated in Redwood City, California. All of the buildings were sold to private individuals and were moved away. Today several of the homes can still be seen as residences in Fairfield.

The memories of Cement cannot be erased as far as I am concerned and when I look at those hills today, I do not see the skeleton remains, but I see the town that I was born in and loved.

My father worked there first as a "jitney driver"; then he became foreman of a machine shop. Four children were born there to him and my mother—namely, Viola Wright Eisenzopf of Sacramento, Marvel Wright Little and Walter Clyde Wright, Jr., of Fairfield, and Ruth Kilkeny of Dixon.

Mare Island Wheels

by Sue Lemmon

This is the story of wheels—wheels that have rolled and turned at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, located on the North Bay at the city of Vallejo, California.

No one knows exactly who invented wheels—they are usually credited to the Elamites because their sculptures are the earliest to portray them. They may be more than 6,000 years old. We only know that nature has never provided anything that works like a wheel. It is absolutely man-made. While fire may be man's greatest discovery, his greatest invention is the wheel.

Many varieties of wheels have been used at Mare Island, which celebrated its 132nd birthday this September. When David Glasgow Farragut arrived to establish the Navy Yard in 1854, the wheels used on the ox-carts were primitive, but they served the purpose, however clumsy they appear today. Oxen and horses played an important role in the early days of Mare Island. Five days after his arrival, Farragut noted in his diary of September 21, 1854, "Purchased a yoke of oxen for the use of the Yard." Under date of February 16, 1857, he noted, "One of the work oxen died this day."

The Island, which was dry and dusty for many months of the year, became a quagmire of mud in the rainy seasons. Transportation was almost impossible except by horse and oxen-drawn conveyances.

Before long, material was being moved around the young shipyard in wooden carts with 14 or 16-spoke wheels. Most of these simple carts were pushed by men; others were pulled by oxen or horses. While the livestock have been replaced by small and large tractors, men still push the same old wooden carts that have been in service for over 100 years.

A study of old pictures of Mare Island shows these venerable old carts have been in wide use for many years. For the moving of materials around the shops and waterfront (for many years unpaved, later laid with wooden planks), nothing worked better than these carts.

According to now-retired Master Rigger Eddie Martinez, these push carts were the best means of transporting equipment such as ships' rigging, tools, canvas, tarpaulins, hardware, and lumber from one place to another. Masts and yards from the Spar Shop were loaded on two-wheel carts for



One of the personalized carts still in use today at Mare Island.



Early transportation on Mare Island, c 1860.

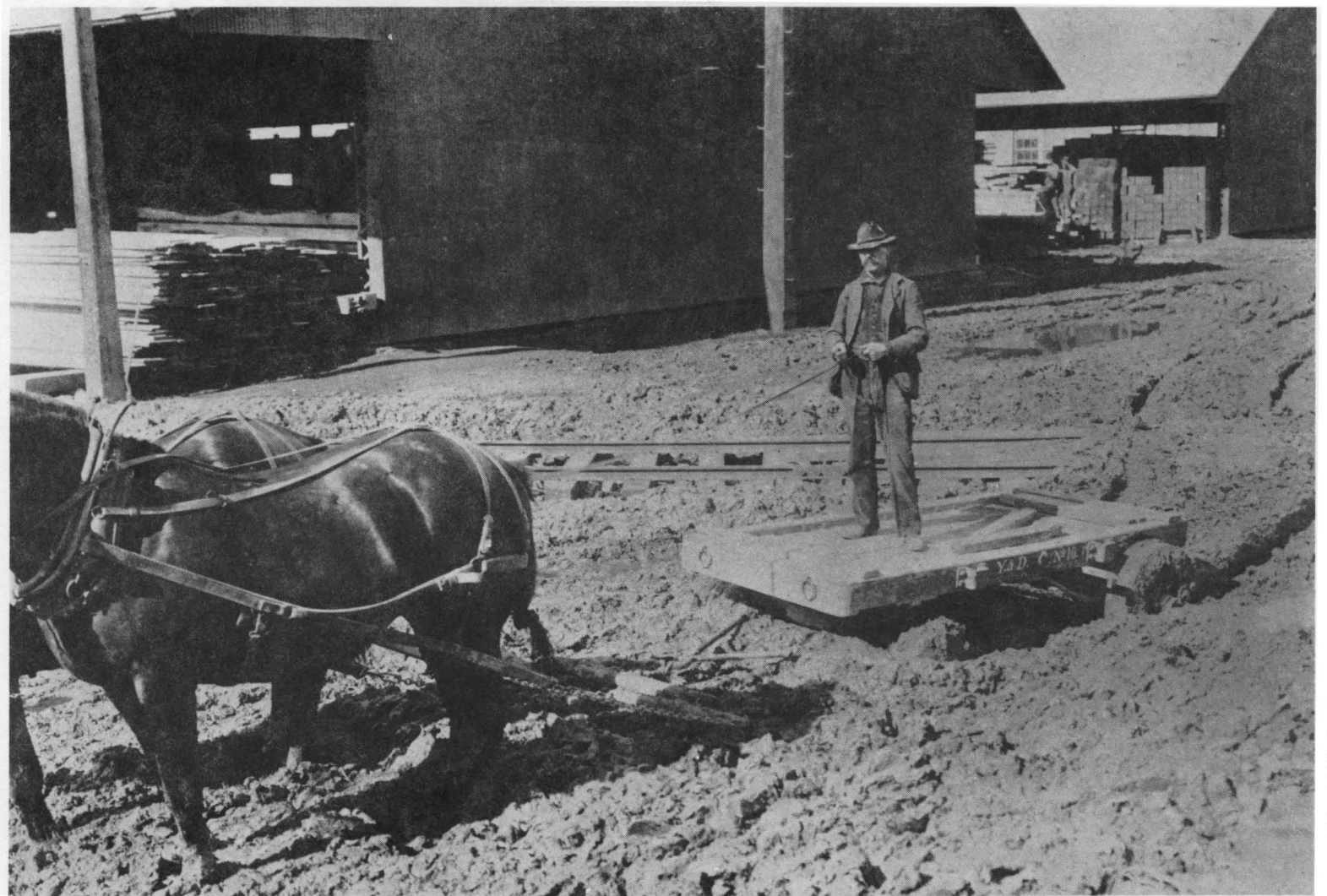


In 1868 Commodore T.T. Craven called on the Commanding Officer of the Benicia Arsenal in this rig. The two sailors proceeded ahead by boat, while the Commodore drove the ten miles from Vallejo to Benicia.



U.S. NAVY

Official carriage of Rear Admiral M. Miller, Mare Island Commandant in 1904.
Note the energy-saving services: windmill and kerosene running lights.



U.S. NAVY

In mid-winter's muddy mire (1908), the wheels can hardly be seen.

transportation to location. If the masts were too long, two carts were used in tandem, with plain old manpower as the prime mover.

Sometimes it took two, three, or four men to push these carts. Somewhere along the line, someone decided to use a small gasoline engine to provide power for a 4-wheel platform-type cart. These small material vehicles were called "chore boys," and were noted as a form of progress.

The main function of the early carts was to haul docking and mooring lines from the storage area to the dry docks and waterfront, where they were used to secure ships that came to Mare Island for repairs or to deliver materials such as coal, stone, lumber, and miscellaneous merchandise. In the early years ships were driven by canvas, then fueled by oil, and later propelled by nuclear power. Originally they were copper-bottomed wooden ships; later larger ships built of steel replaced the wooden hulls. But regardless of the type of construction or propulsion, all ships share one requirement: they need lines to secure them at dockside or in drydock. Lines used to secure a ship become easily damaged if they are abraded or cut by being dragged over metal or stones. When the lines are no longer required, they are re-coiled, placed in a cart and taken to the storage "corral" until the next docking. During winters it was necessary to remove them from the carts and place the ropes on drying racks, to prevent mildew deterioration.

Of all equipment at Mare Island, these carts are probably the best preserved. Originally they were built in the Spar Shop, and some were bought commercially, but they are all maintained by the men who use them, and who are responsible for seeing that the carts are properly oiled and in good working condition. The bands, or "iron tires," have been changed many times; some cart beds have been renewed and an occasional spoke or wheel replaced. Still, they appear and are used today just as they were decades ago.

Over the years carts were used by the Public Works, Production, and Supply Departments for delivery of items to shops and around the Island. Fuel efficient, available, and easy to maneuver, they often are painted and customized by the men who use them and who take a proprietary interest in them. "Mike's Taxi," "Tom's Truck," and "Brock's Buggy" are common sights on the waterfront.

Other wheels used on the Shipyard include those on bicycles, trucks and trailers, cranes, locomotives, wheelbarrows, and of course automobiles. The type of wheels re-

quired to move humans around the Yard has varied greatly over the years. In 1868, Admiral Craven, the Commandant, had a smart buggy which was pulled by his favorite horse. When he paid his official call on the Commanding Officer at Benicia Arsenal, he had to travel over ten miles of

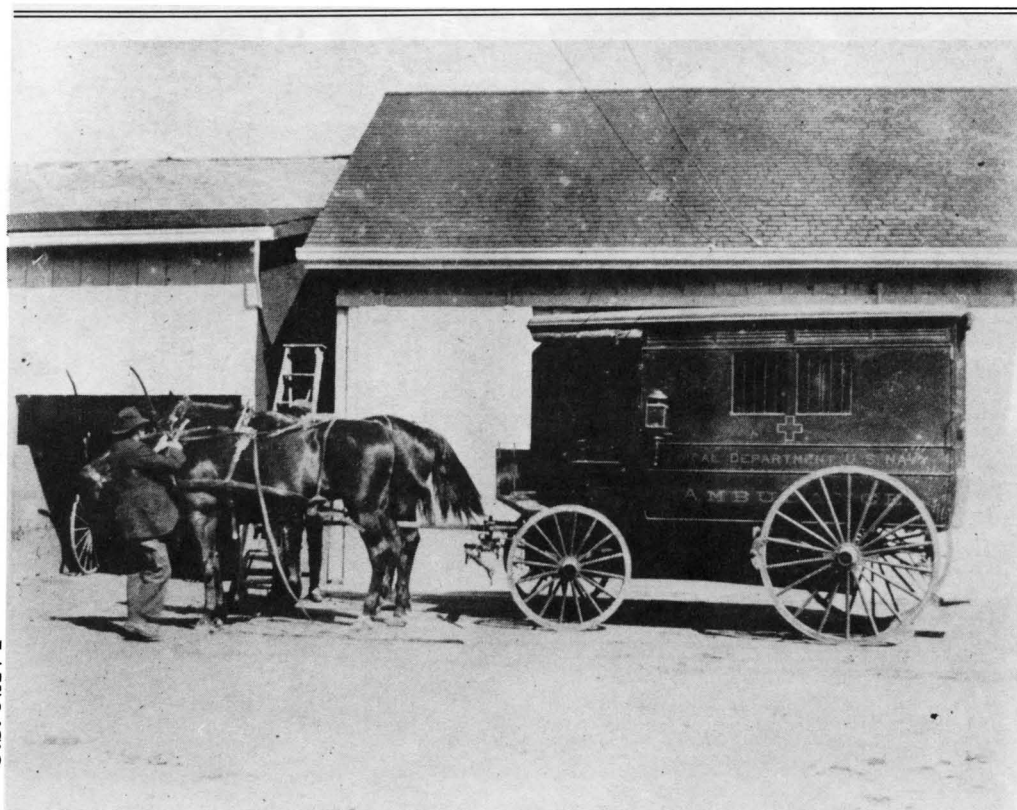
dusty, rough road. In 1904, Admiral Miller's official survey was drawn by "Daisy" and "Admiral."

Gradually, however, the horse gave way. In 1922, Commandant Beach's car had cord tires, artillery wheels, a running board, retractable top, and an outside



U.S. NAVY

In 1909, the treasury moved on wheels. The pay cart made semi-monthly tours of the Yard and paid employees at the shops and offices. Workers were paid in gold and silver coins then, and "take home pay" meant the same as "gross pay." The last four-footed workers were replaced by cars and trucks in 1930.



U.S. NAVY

Good, sturdy wheels were needed for the ambulance. This 1909 photo also includes (left) a buggy in storage.

radiator. Today, Shipyard Commander H. P. Mann, USN, drives a small Ford sedan.

While it cannot be verified, according to local legend the first automobile used by the Shipyard was a small Elcar pickup, in 1914. Manufactured by the Elkhart Carriage and Motor Car Company of Elkhart, Indiana, it was a new and fascinating piece of equipment on the waterfront. In those days there were no requirements to pass a driver's test. If you could get behind the steering wheel, you could drive. The Elcar lasted less than one month. A teamster, accustomed to one or two-horsepower vehicles, managed to drive the car into the drydock. Fortunately, the dock was flooded, and he swam ashore unhurt. The car was a total loss.

A General Order signed by Rear Admiral Hugo Osterhaus decreed: "Automobiles will not be driven within the Navy Yard grounds at a greater speed than six miles per hour. Whenever vehicles

drawn by horses are approached, the speed will be reduced; and, if there is any indication of animals being unduly frightened, the automobiles will be stopped."

The early-day Fire Department on Mare Island depended on horse-drawn carts to carry their hoses and chemicals to the scene of the conflagration. In the winter, with the accompanying sea of mud on the Island, response time was not always swift. And if the fire originated at the southern end of the Island, the fire-wagon carts would be pulled by horses to dockside where men pushed the carts onto the steam launch. Then, with huffs and puffs, the launch would proceed south down the river, and land at the Naval Ammunition Depot landing, unload, get more horses, and eventually arrive at the fire. If the weather was good, and the roads dry enough, the horse-drawn carts could go directly to the south end of the Island in 10 or 15 minutes.

The Mare Island police department likewise depended on horses to pull around the wagon that hauled recalcitrant sailors and workers to the Police Station. The former could then be transferred to the brig, and the latter to the ferry for quick transportation off the Island. The ambulance, too, was horse-drawn, but available to take ailing Mare Island residents, as well as injured workmen, to the Hospital at a fast trot if necessary.

A very familiar and welcome sight was the horse-drawn Pay Wagon—always accompanied by a Marine Guard on horseback, who kept one eye on the Paymaster inside the wagon, and one eye on the workmen who obediently queued up for their cash pay twice a month.

Until July 1919, when the first causeway was completed, the only way to get to Mare Island was by boat. Only one family in three owned an automobile in those days, and most Mare Island employees



U.S. NAVY

In 1922, Admiral Hugh Rodman, president of the commission to seek a new navy yard, visited Mare Island. In rear seat is Colonel Lincoln Karmany, USMC, Admiral Rodman, and Assistant Secretary of the Navy Henry Roosevelt. In the "jump seat" is Captain E. L. Beach, Mare Island Commandant.

lived in nearby Vallejo and could walk to the ferry. After the causeway opened, a few automobiles and hundreds of bicycles jostled the pedestrians for position on the narrow causeway. The congestion became so bad that the Commandant issued a General Order: "Automobiles and bicycles will not be permitted to enter the causeway until 15 minutes after quit work. This is for the greatest good for the greatest number, and the greatest number walk."

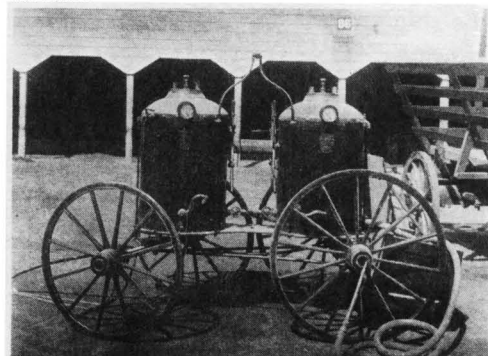
Today, more than 100 motorcycles and dozens of bicycles and mopeds provide transportation onto the Yard for some workers, while the Shipyard provides 2,000 bicycles for use of the Island. Originally the bikes were assigned to individuals, then some Business School Graduate Manager decided to form pools, from which individuals could take a bicycle. For a short time, a favorite game was to peddle a bike as fast as possible down

the pier, then "launch" it out into the channel — the winner being the one who covered the greatest distance in the air before getting wet. After a few such incidents, plus a growing number of missing velocipedes, management decided to forget the pool idea. Today the issuance of bicycles is well controlled.

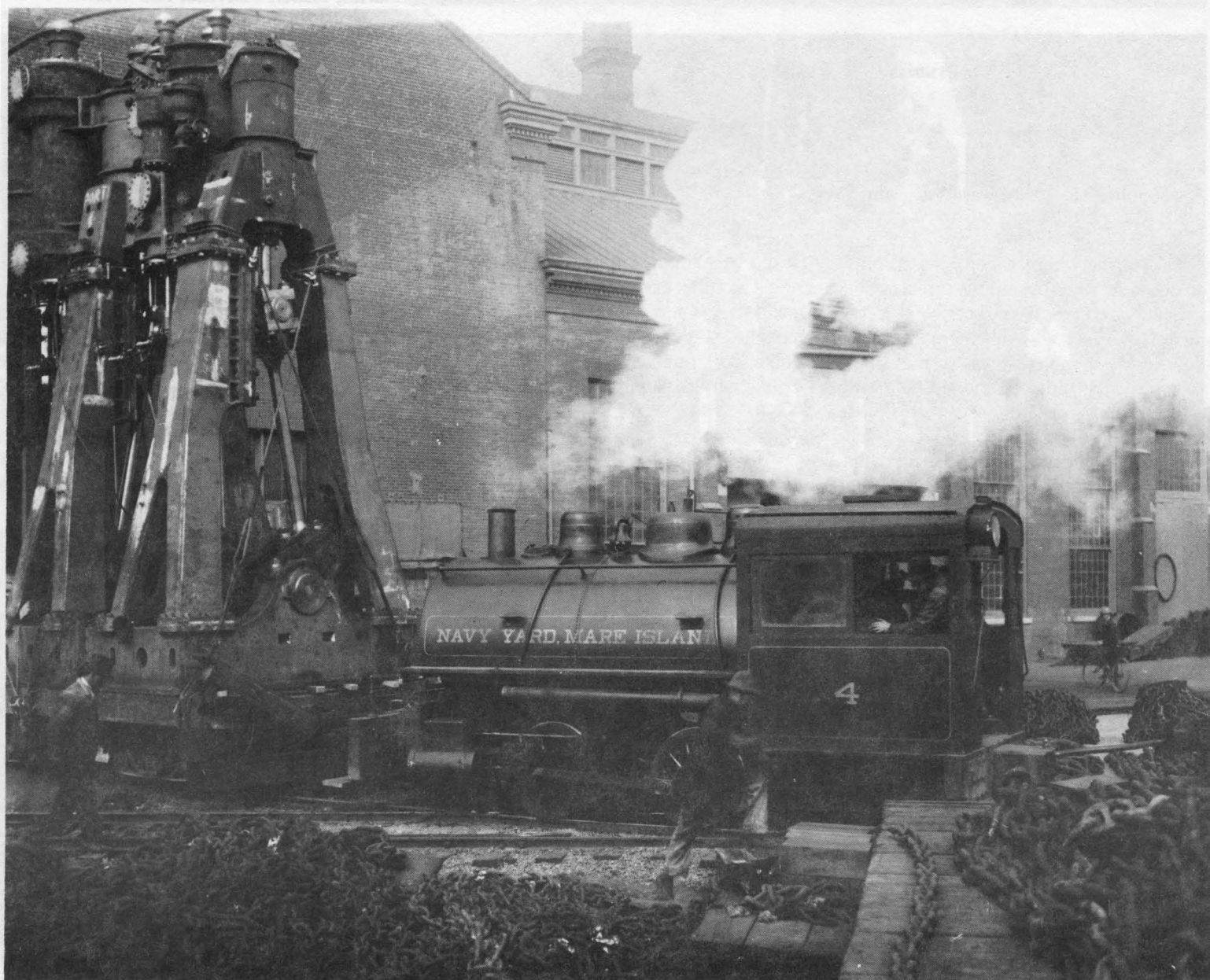
There have been many other uses of the wheel at Mare Island. Following the World's Fair at Treasure Island in 1940, the Navy purchased the "Elephant Trains" that had been used there, and employed them to carry employees from one part of the Yard to another, following an established schedule and route. At other times, large covered trailers with open sides were used for this same purpose, except that all passengers had to stand.

For transporting material, the Supply Department used "Mule Trains." The trains consisted of small four-wheel

wagons towed by a tractor-type vehicle. As many as 20 loaded wagons would comprise a train, and the loaded wagons were dropped off at specific delivery points as the train continued on its route. Collection areas for empty wagons were established, and on the return trip, the "Mule Train" took a load of empties for reloading and re-use.



Chemical Engine, housed at the Yard Stables, was used to fight fires in 1914.



Wheels of another variety were used to move the engines of the USS KANAWHA in August 1914.

During World War II, two and three-wheel scooters were used by Senior Supervisors for rapid transportation to work sites. After several severe accidents to drivers and equipment, the scooters were recalled.

The word “wheel” is familiar to any sea-going person. Many of them still refer to the ship’s propeller as the “wheel,” and the ship’s wheel is located in the Wheel House.

There is literally no end to the wheel, nor any way to know how many wheels have been utilized at Mare Island — the figure would surely be in the hundreds of thousands. It can truly be said, however, that wheels have played a major role in keeping Mare Island Naval Shipyard moving ahead for the past 132 years.



Mrs. Mary Devlin was photographed holding son Frank just prior to coming to Vallejo. From left to right, her other children are Charles, Isabel, Florence, and Will.



The earthquake of March 30, 1898, did considerable damage to some of the brick buildings.

The inevitable push cart was used to facilitate cleaning up the fallen bricks.

Strangely enough, the earthquake of 1906 did very little damage at the shipyard.

Frank R. Devlin — A Leading Citizen of Vallejo

by Marion Devlin

When Frank R. Devlin was graduated from Vallejo High School in 1884 he delivered the graduation oration on "Ambition." The topic was well chosen, because the ensuing years brought him a distinguished legal career, friendships with many prominent state and national personages, and recognition for his lifetime efforts in public service.

Born in Windsor, Ontario, in 1868, he was brought to Vallejo the following year by his widowed mother, Mrs. Mary Devlin. Accompanying them were Frank's sisters and brothers, Isabel, Florence, Charles and Will. This was the first year the transcontinental railroad was in operation, and Mrs. Devlin had decided to join her cousins here, the John Sullivan family, who wrote enthusiastically about life in sunny California.

Young Frank went all through the Vallejo schools, served on the altar at St. Vincent's Church and after receiving his diploma from Vallejo High School it was time to take the next step.

For several years he had known what he wanted: a career in law. But he said that in those days universities and law schools were only for rich men's sons, and much too far out of his reach.

But he chose well when he decided to enter the Navy, serving as shipwright and pay yeoman. During his six years he made a world cruise on the U.S.S. Dolphin where one of his shipmates was Ens. John M. Ellicott, USN. Young Ensign Ellicott retired as a captain and made his home at Mare Island until his death. Citing young Devlin's drive and ambition, Captain Ellicott said that on many occasions when the men had free time for reading or cards, Frank would seek out a quiet corner where he could read his law books.

Those shipboard law sessions were evidently helpful, because after his Navy duty he studied law in the prestigious office of Judge Henry C. Gesford of Napa. In due course he was admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of California in 1892.

When he was 26 he became the youngest man ever to serve as District Attorney of Solano County. He served two terms in the State Legislature where he was recognized as a crusading and independent young lawmaker.

It was during these years that the Vallejoan met and became friends with similarly minded men who were determined to throw out "the machine" which con-



Frank R. Devlin as a Vallejo schoolboy.

troled much of California.

Harry Gray, history instructor at Solano College (now retired) and an authority on California history, pointed out that there had been earlier attempts to destroy the political machine in this state but all had failed.

"Then along came the Progressives, led by such men as Devlin, Chester Rowell, Edward Dickson and Hiram Johnson. Here was a group of experienced political leaders, and all firmly dedicated to the proposition that the time had come for a grass roots movement in California to remove the horrible blot of self-interest and corruption in public places. Thus was the Lincoln-Roosevelt League born."

A state convention was held, with delegates attending from both the Republican and Democratic parties, when Devlin was elected chairman of the committee and president of the Lincoln-Roosevelt League.

The election of Hiram Johnson as Governor in 1910 clearly indicated the power of the Progressive Party.

In 1908 Mr. Devlin was elected, without opposition, to a six-year term as Solano County Superior Court Judge. He resigned the judgeship shortly after to resume private practice.

In 1915 the Devlin family left their home at Georgia and Alameda Streets for San Francisco, and Mr. Devlin assumed his new duties as a member of the State Railroad Commission (now the Public Utilities Commission), to which he was appointed by Governor Hiram Johnson.



Frank R. Devlin was a man with a perceptive and analytical mind.

He resigned as president of the Railroad Commission in 1920 to return to private practice, but was appointed again to the Railroad Commission in 1934 by Governor Frank F. Merriam. He served there until his retirement from public service in 1941.

A warm and genial personality, he made friends readily, but those he valued most went back to his early days in Vallejo. He was particularly proud of his charter membership in Vallejo Lodge 559, B.P.O.E., of which he was first Exalted Ruler, later serving as District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler. He was an organizer and for several years a director and vice-president of the First National Bank of Vallejo. He also served as president of the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce and took an active part in many phases of the community.

He had no time for golf or other hobbies, although he was a longtime member, director and vice-president of the Union League Club of San Francisco, and also the Olympic Club where he swam several times a week.

He was married in 1902 to Agnes G. Erb of Napa, and they were the parents of three daughters: Ruth Devlin de Carbonel and Doris Devlin Clement, both deceased, and Marion Devlin of Vallejo, for many years women's editor of the *Vallejo Times-Herald*.

A most indulgent father, nevertheless he could display a bit of Irish temper if we transgressed where time was concerned. He took pride in the fact this his daughters all attended and were graduated from the University of California, a school he would have gladly chosen for himself. And for each of us there was a brand new shiny small car to start our campus career.

I remember only one time when he tried to back out of a promise, and attempted some unsuccessful conniving. He and my mother had planned for some time to take us three girls on a "Grand Tour" of Europe. The auspicious time was chosen while I was still in high school and my sisters in college. My father had only one stipulation: plan anything we liked but let him stay at home. He had done all of his traveling while in the Navy.

When this was first planned and many months away he was as enthusiastic as we were. As the time grew shorter he had misgivings, but didn't have the heart to say so. He threw out feelers: there were labor troubles in Ireland, maybe it would be wise to wait a year.

The thought of the long separation depressed him. Finally he thought he had the solution. He mentioned casually that a home not far from ours which my mother had always admired was going to be of-

fered for sale. Wouldn't she like him to make an offer the next morning, and then he added casually: "Of course you'll have to postpone the trip. You'll be needed here to supervise any renovations."

My mother gave him a level look that told him she saw through his little plot, and said, well no, much as she loved that house the trip should not be changed.

He gave in and away we went. And at every hotel we stopped there were letters from Dad, one written every day from May until mid-September.

When we arrived in New York he was at the pier to meet us, with tickets for the three top shows, and another surprise: we were coming home on Canadian Pacific, with stops at Lake Louise and Banff.

He died August 25, 1945. The *Times Herald* obituary the following morning described him as "A man with a keen, perceptive and analytical mind, Judge Devlin lost none of the common touch in his rise to positions of importance and power in Solano County and the state."

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